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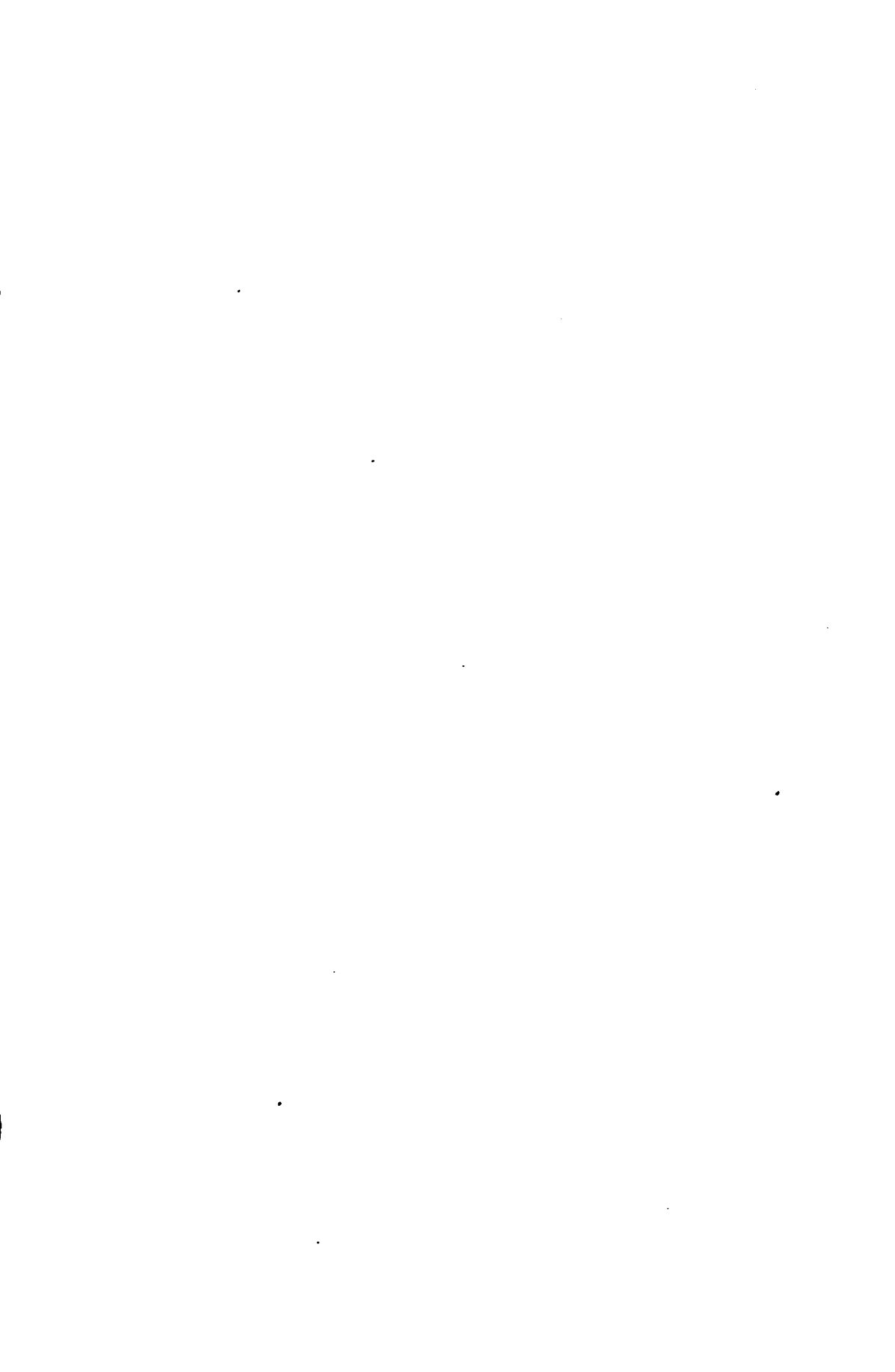
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HISTORY OF FRANCE

AND OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE:

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRANKS IN GAUL, TO THE PERIOD OF
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

BY GEORGE MOIR BUSSEY

AUTHOR OF A "HISTORY OF
NAPOLEON."
ETC.

AND THOMAS GASPEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
THE GOOD LORD COBHAM."
ETC.

Enriched

WITH FOUR HUNDRED DESIGNS BY JULES DAVID.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MDCCCL.



P R E F A C E.

THE History of France now submitted to the public, if not carried out to the full extent of the original plan, will be found to contain much that is wanting elsewhere. To have proceeded with it to the accession of King Louis Philippe in 1830, and no further, would have been anything but satisfactory. That event, though important, was not so momentous compared with other epochs in the annals of France, as to furnish a good reason for stopping there; and it was absolutely impossible to reach that point in the twenty parts announced, without consigning events of great magnitude in themselves, as well as most important in their consequences, to the narrow limits of chronology. It was therefore deemed expedient to close the work with the death of Louis XVI. The awful scenes which immediately followed, and the great results to which they led, have been so often and so ably detailed, that a meagre outline, at this time of day, could have had no value.

To bring before the English public the elaborate designs which had won admiration in the Pictorial History of France by Theodore Burette, was one of the main objects which the proprietors had originally in view. These enabled them to bring home to the understanding many remarkable scenes and striking passages more vividly than could have been done by description, without such valuable aids. By youthful minds especially, such a mode of "teaching through the eye" will be found both captivating and efficient.

Though, for the reason given above, it was necessary to follow the course pursued by the French author just named, the work now offered is anything but a literal translation. Events which he has wholly omitted are supplied, and others, by him merely glanced at, have been restored to their just

dimensions, but with an anxious care to avoid what might be deemed verbosity. To dismiss great battles with a single line, and to hurry over other scenes of memorable interest in the like manner, could not have informed or gratified the student. Where such omissions occurred, the deficiency has been made good, in order to fulfil the promise made in the first instance, of adding to the literature of England "a complete, but at the same time concise, History of France and of the French people, carefully compiled from the works of the native chroniclers, historians and biographers, collated, in all cases, with the text adopted in the elaborate works of recent French historians."

Let it not be thought, from the course which has been adopted, that the proprietors underrate the struggles and catastrophes which have been witnessed since 1793. Far from doing so, they admit the story of the half century which has just closed, if written by an impartial hand, alike uninfluenced by the wild excitement of revolutionary zeal, and the prejudices favourable to the system which obtained in France, under her kings, would be more replete with striking incidents, solemn warnings, and lessons of wisdom, than any publication that has ever issued from the press; and it is precisely for that reason—because justice could not be done to its stupendous importance—that the line of conduct in question has been preferred. Throughout their pages, they trust it will be seen, that crime and folly, all party-feeling, discarded, have been unsparingly condemned; and that a resolution to impart the truth, without fear or affection, and to favour whatever might tend to promote concord among nations, and to improve the social system of the world, will be found to prevail.



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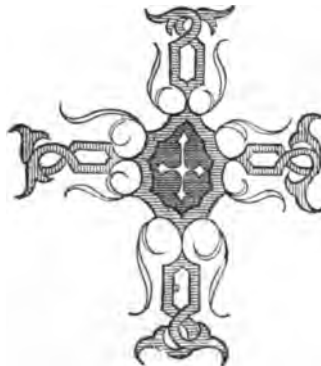
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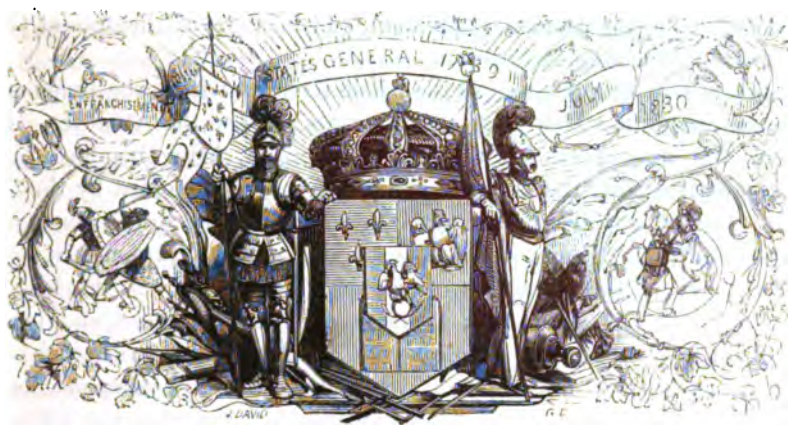
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HISTORY OF FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

TO THE ELEVATION OF CLOVIS AS KING OF THE FRANKS, A. D. 481.

ANCIENT GAUL—INVASION AND CONQUEST BY THE ROMANS—IRRUPTIONS AND SETTLEMENT OF THE GOTHs, BURGUNDIANS, VANDALS, ALLEMANNI AND FRANKS.



IN the history of every nation, vague tradition must be the chief guide of him who would investigate the origin and settlement of the earliest inhabitants; and, though the antiquary may possibly glean from such a source some few facts to guide him in his researches, it could afford little interest, and would be of less utility to the general reader, to be told what has been conjectured, rather than ascertained, concerning the first colonists of a nation which is known to have remained for ages in a state of ignorance and barbarism. From the 'Commentaries of Cæsar' we obtain the only information that may be relied

upon, respecting the country, population, and manners of the ancient Gauls, to the date of the Roman invasion.

Gallia, at that time, comprised the whole territory within the limits of the Rhine, the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the Atlantic. It was divided into three portions, of which the largest, being bounded by the Rhone, the Garonne, the Atlantic and the Seine, was peopled by the Celtic Gauls. The second, inclosed by the Rhine, the Seine and the German Ocean, was occupied by the Belgæ; and the third, bounded by the Garonne, the Rhone, the Pyrenees, and the Atlantic, was inhabited by the Aquitani. Each division is said to have had its distinct language, laws, and customs, and to have contained a number of independent clans, frequently at war with each other, and seldom effectively united except when their collective independence was threatened by foreigners. It is most probable, however, that the differences observable in the dialect and manners of the several States, arose rather from modifications introduced by frequent intercourse with neighbouring races than from any diversity of origin in the primitive population. The Belgæ were in constant communication, both in times of peace and of war, with the Germans dwelling along the Rhine; and the Aquitani maintained a friendly correspondence with the more civilised people of Spain: hence the language and habits of the remoter districts naturally underwent a gradual change, while those of the midland tribes remained almost entirely uncorrupted. The old names of rivers, mountains, forests, and other localities, are still Celtic throughout France.

The government of the Gauls was partly in the hands of the chiefs of tribes, several of whom occasionally submitted, for the accomplishment of some common object, to the authority of a king or chief-magistrate; but in all important affairs, the direction was entrusted to the powerful order of priests, called Druids. All the higher functions of public administration appertained to the latter; for, although the princes and chiefs had the command of their respective nations or clans in war, they were not allowed to act without the sanction of the Druids;—nor even, according to Dio Chrysostom, “to consult about the execution of any design without their participation.” The people themselves also appear to have had considerable influence in matters of State. Ambiorix, King of the Eburones, one of the Gallic tribes settled between the Meuse and the Rhine, excused himself to Cæsar, for a sudden assault by his troops on the Roman camp, by saying that it had not been done “with his will or consent, but by compulsion of the populace; the nature of his authority being such, that the multitude had as much power over him as he over the multitude.” The precise nature of the government, however, has not been recorded, except as to the share taken by the Druids; whose power, indeed, must have absorbed that of all nominal participators. They not only presided at the public sacrifices and religious celebrations, but in the courts of justice, civil and criminal; and decided all causes, as well between nations, tribes, and communities, as between man and man. They were, moreover,

the ambassadors employed to conduct all State negotiations, and at the same time the lawyers, philosophers, physicians and instructors of youth. Whoever refused obedience to their decrees was interdicted from the assemblies of his tribe, was denounced as impious and accursed, put out of the protection of the laws, excluded from office and honour, and driven from the converse and presence of his fellows. The Druids were exempt from the payment of taxes, from all public burdens, and from military service. They ranked above the highest nobility, from whose families their order was chiefly recruited; being themselves, like the Catholic priesthood of later days, restricted from marrying. Occasionally kings were numbered in their body. Cicero relates that Divitiacus, Prince of the Ædui, who was personally known to him, and who so greatly assisted Cæsar in the final subjugation of Gaul, was a Druid, and well versed in all the learning of his brotherhood.

Besides the secular power possessed by the Druids, was that which they obtained over the minds of men by their peculiar doctrines. They taught the worship of one God, the interpreters of whose revealed will they professed to be; and they inculcated a belief in the immortality of the soul, the happiness or misery of which, in its various transmigrations through innumerable stages of new existence, depended mainly on the observance of their precepts. This, as a political instrument, is known to have operated with the greatest effect upon their disciples, rendering them indifferent to the preservation of a life, which, if worthily lost, would be instantly renewed in a better and more glorious shape; and hence the universal bravery of the Celtic tribes, and their repugnance to the yoke of conquerors, who had no equivalent to offer for a faith which they found it necessary to proscribe. But while much of the influence of the Druids may be ascribed to the terrors which they inspired, it is certain that they could only have retained their power by exciting the love and veneration of their votaries. The functions of temporal guide, physician, and magistrate, which the Druid blended with those of priest, may partly account for the esteem in which the Order was so long held; but it is to their government and laws themselves, that we must look for a fuller exposition of that popular regard which sufficed, secretly, to uphold the ancient superstition through several centuries of persecution, and on which, in more than one nation, popular memory lingered much later, as on something that ought not wholly to have perished.

Cæsar himself, and several subsequent authors among his countrymen, bear ample testimony to the invincible love of freedom which actuated the Gauls in their protracted struggle against the power of Rome; a struggle which ceased only with the almost total extermination of the Druids:—and it is generally admitted, that with the latter originated much of the criminal jurisprudence of modern Europe. The extraction of evidence by torture was one of their forms of procedure. Murder, theft, and several other crimes were punished with death, by burning or crucifixion; and a law of dower prevailed among them, under which the wife enjoyed rights equal to the husband: a fact which

throws considerable suspicion upon an assertion of Cæsar's, that the Gauls had absolute power and control over their wives and children.

The people of Gaul resided in huts, of a circular form, with conical or domed roofs, constructed of poles and wattle-work, plastered with clay and thatched with straw. They lived on the cattle which they reared, and prey taken in the chase—with cheese, milk, butter, and coarse bread. Their common drink was mead or metheglin, and a species of ale prepared from barley. They appear to have had considerable knowledge of the mechanical arts, and manufactured, at an early period, war-chariots, which carried consternation into the ranks of the Roman army, many formidable weapons of war, some rude articles of domestic furniture, various kinds of pottery, and linen and woollen cloths, and felt. They had also much skill in music, of which and poetry they were exceedingly fond; and they used for money certain rings and pieces of metal adjusted to particular weights. The costume of the chiefs and wealthy classes consisted of a dyed cloth *tunic*, flowered with many colours; close trowsers, which they called *braccæ*, made of striped or chequered cloth—believed to be identical with the plaid still common among the descendants of the Gaul or Gael, in the Scottish Highlands—and a loose mantle, called a *sagum*. Their personal ornaments were rings, bracelets, armlets, and anklets, of iron, copper, or brass, and sometimes of gold or silver; and, as a symbol of command, the chiefs wore *torques* or twisted chains, formed of flexible rods or wires of gold, silver, or bronze. The poorer natives wore skins of animals, instead of the cloth *sagum*, and seem not unfrequently to have gone almost naked. The hospitality of the people is spoken of as having been unbounded.

From their early emigrations, the name of the Gauls was well known to the civilised world long before Cæsar's conquest of their country. The most celebrated of their expeditions were those in which their *Brenns* or chiefs—a title which the Romans latinized into *Brennus*, and which has been generally mistaken for a personal appellation—conducted into Italy and Greece. In the latter, the temple of Delphos, in which was stored the treasure of the priests of Apollo, was sacked and desecrated; and in the former, the adventurers attacked and captured the city of Rome itself, which they pillaged and burned [B. C. 385]; and, although they were compelled to retreat from the Capitol, and were subsequently defeated by Camillus, they could not be prevented from establishing strong colonies in Upper Italy, part of which, from them, assumed the name of Cisalpine Gaul. Cicero admits that these daring invaders were the most dangerous of all the enemies of the ancient Republic, and intimates that, had the new settlers been vigorously supported from behind the Alps, the Gauls might have succeeded in replacing the descendants of Romulus even in their southern dominions.

Before these irruptions, however, the Phœnicians, who for many ages monopolized the trade of the world, had traversed Gaul and made their way to Britain, with which island they had established a thriving commerce in

pearls, tin, lead, iron, and other commodities; but the excessive jealousy of this merchant people would not permit them to make known their geographical information, and Gaul, to the rest of the world, remained still in profound obscurity. Nevertheless, about the year B. C. 600, an expedition from Phocis, a rich and populous coast-city of Ionia, sailing in search of a new settlement, landed on the southern extremity of Gaul, in the territory of a small tribe called the Segobriges. The natives not only received the strangers hospitably, but their king or chief became so attached to Euxene, the Phocean leader, that he conferred on him the hand of his daughter in marriage, and publicly gave him a tract of land on which to found a colony. This was the origin of the great mercantile city of Massylia (Marseilles). Sixty years later, the parent stock of these Greek settlers was attacked by the great Cyrus, and, after a brave but ineffectual resistance, the whole population determined, rather than submit to a foreign yoke, to seek a free home with their brethren beyond sea. Accordingly, they launched their frail, though, at that time, considered large and strong vessels, upon the great deep, and embarking with their wives, children, and all that was most dear and precious to them, they threw into the waves a mass of iron, and took a solemn oath never to return to the forsaken shore, till that metal should re-appear and float upon the surface; then, setting sail, they steered for Corsica, whence they gathered a number of their countrymen, who had begun to form a colony, and proceeding to Massylia, the whole nation became located there.

The establishment of the wealthy and industrious Phoceans, a skilful and intelligent, as well as maritime, people, in a situation so favourable for trade, could not fail to give much uneasiness to the Carthaginian merchants; at whose instigation the native tribes—already alarmed at the number, power, and, it may be, the ambition of their neighbours—took every opportunity of harrassing and opposing them. The consequence of this hostility was, that the colonists, finding their existence endangered, and knowing the hereditary enmity borne to the Carthaginians by the Romans, formed a close alliance with the latter, and assisted them, by every means in their power, to weaken and humiliate their rivals. After the destruction of Rome by the Gauls, the Massylians put their treasures at the disposal of the Republic, which, in return, assigned to them the place of honour at their public games and spectacles, and conferred on them the protection and dignity of the Roman name.

The first time that we hear of the two races acting together, in a military capacity, is in 218, when Hannibal was advancing through Gaul, to carry the second Punic war into Italy. The Romans then, hoping to prevent the further passage of the enemy, applied to their friends, the Phoceans, who immediately opened to them a road through Massylia, and procured them guides, and the aid of some Gallic tribes as auxiliaries. The assistance of the Massylians, however; though it served to prove their fidelity, was of little

advantage to their allies. While Cornelius Scipio, with his army of mingled Romans and Volscians, waited at one spot to dispute the passage of the Rhone with the invaders, Hannibal, who was desirous of giving battle in the proper territory of his adversaries, crossed the river at another point; and Scipio, too late informed of the Carthaginian movements, could only bring up a few cohorts in time to make a feeble and useless assault upon the Numidian



cavalry, which formed the enemy's rear guard. Unable to pursue the intrepid African through the country of the Allobroges, into which he had entered, the Roman general returned to the coast, re-embarked his troops, and sailed round to the foot of the Alps, towards the rugged summits of which the Carthaginians were directing their toilsome but undaunted march. Here again his efforts were unavailing to stop the progress of the foe, who marched onward from victory to victory, almost to the gates of Rome itself. Too confident of success, however, Hannibal suffered the crowning triumph of his achievements to elude him—wasting the moments when he might have dictated terms to his panic-stricken adversaries in dalliance with foreign courtezans. This lost time and negligence were irretrievable; and eventually the war was transferred from Italy to Africa. The Massylians, meanwhile, appear to have withdrawn from the struggle, and to have awaited the result with fear and trembling, till the battle of Zama and the death of Hannibal freed them from all suspense, and gave them at once new hopes and new importance.

The destruction of the Carthaginian power, however, was fatal to the Phœceans, who, not content with engrossing the entire commerce of the coasts of Gaul and Spain, which they had before merely shared with their rivals, sought, like the old Phœnicians themselves, to add territorial aggrandisement to their wealth; and, by their pretensions and aggressions, they soon aroused the slumbering resentment of the native tribes by whom they were surrounded. Leagues were speedily formed among the neighbouring clans;



at first, perhaps, only to repel the encroachments of the haughty citizens, but subsequently, it seems, to crush Massylia, and resume their ancient dominion over the site of the colony. The Phoceans, pressed on all sides, and little inured to war, were obliged, in this crisis, to appeal for support to the Romans, who having thus obtained a pretext for interfering in the affairs of Gaul, and a footing in the country, never wholly quitted its soil again, till the dissolution of their own Empire.

At that moment, however, being unprepared probably to undertake the immediate conquest of the land, they contented themselves with leaving two or three garrisons to keep open the Alpine passes, and returned to Italy. But it was not long ere they re-crossed the mountains in greater force, and giving battle [B. C. 123] to the Ligurians, who endeavoured to oppose their march, the Romans founded a colony upon the field of their first victory, and gave to it the name of their general, Sextius—*Aquæ Sextiæ*, now called *Aix*. Two years afterwards, Domitius Ænobarbus attacked and routed the Allobroges at Vindalia, near the site of the present city of Avignon; and Bituitus, King of the powerful nation of the Arverni, hastening, too late, to the succour of his unfortunate countrymen, was met at the mouth of the Isère, and his immense army, consisting, it is said, of two hundred thousand men, was totally defeated. It is not improbable that the number of Gauls in this statement is greatly exaggerated; and a reasonable doubt may even be entertained as to the victory arrogated to themselves by the Romans; since it is acknowledged that Bituitus was not fairly captured in war, or treated like an enemy humiliated by defeat; but was seized during a conference with the invaders, conveyed to Italy, and condemned to spend the remainder of his days in a remote provincial town:—whence it appears that the absence of the Arvernian was necessary to enable the soldiers of the Republic to extend their dominion along the southern coast of his native country.

Henceforward, the progress of the Roman legions, under Scaurus and Martius, both in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, was as rapid as was consistent with the consolidation and security of their conquests, by means of roads and fortified posts, through which a constant communication might be maintained with Rome itself. Martius advanced his standard as far as Tolosatium (Toulouse), between which place and the Pyrenees he founded the important colony of Narbo-Martius (Narbonne), which, soon assuming pre-eminence over Massylia, convinced the Phoceans that it was not in their behalf alone that the Roman troops had so readily accepted an invitation to cross the Alps.

The triumphant career of the Republican arms was, about this time, suspended for awhile, by the appearance from the north of a dense cloud of Cimbri and Teutons. These hordes, quitting the coasts of the Baltic, in the 111th year before the Christian era, traversed the wild forests and morasses of Germany, pillaging the native population in their way; and, urging their uncertain course upon Thrace, Italy, and Gaul, came to confirm the terrors which their rumoured approach had already inspired, on the banks of the Danube and the Rhine. They entered Gaul in 108, and having quickly overrun the less civilised portions of the country, crossed successively the Loire and the Garonne, and carried their ravages within the boundaries of the Roman Province. The veteran legions attacked were unable to withstand their numbers and the fury of their onset, but sustaining defeat after defeat, slowly retired before them, and seemed about to relinquish the hopeless contest; when suddenly the barbarians, turning aside from Narbonne, ascended the Pyrenees, to precipitate their irresistible host upon the fertile plains and valleys of Spain.

This unaccountable caprice ensured the salvation of the Roman settlement in Gaul. While the pillage of the Peninsula was proceeding, Marius, just returned from vanquishing Jugurtha in Africa, was appointed by the Senate to the command of the Republican army beyond the Alps; and had time to re-establish discipline and confidence among his dispirited soldiers, before the return of the enemy: who, indeed, kept him watching for them for two full years. This interval was perhaps of more importance to the history of Rome than to that of France. Marius, a plebeian by birth, had been slowly and reluctantly raised to the rank he now held; and although numbered, at length, among the patricians, and admitted to their privileges, he had never cordially forgiven that order for the many obstacles and difficulties its haughty members had opposed to his advancement. He had retained throughout his career the demeanour, language, and predilections of a democrat; and this conduct, subdued and regulated as it was by the consummate talents of the general, both as a military chief and a political tactician, and being aided by the *prestige* of victory hitherto invariably associated with his name, made him the idol and hope of his troops, who accustomed themselves to look to him alone for glory, honour and reward.

The aristocratic senate had never dealt its substantial praise or patronage to citizens of an inferior grade, however great their services, or brilliant their genius or acquirements, with a free or ungrudging hand; and of this Marius was too shrewd not to remind his followers most effectually by pursuing an opposite course in the appointments and promotions at his disposal. Thus, by securing the attachment of his troops, and rendering them dependent on himself, he more surely paved the way for the triumph of his own ambition, and the establishment of that military despotism to which his countrymen were shortly afterwards subjected, than he could have done by a long course of victories in the field. Hence it has been well observed,—in Gaul, in the camp of Marius, commenced the ruin of the ancient institutions of Rome, and the foundation of a system of domination, which, from Sylla to Augustus, made that city a veritable habitation of slaves, though still dignified with the proud name of Republic; and in Gaul also, in the camp of Cæsar, that iron rule attained its climax.

When the barbarian invaders returned laden with spoils from Spain, they found the Roman legions, whom they had last seen discomfited and flying, calmly waiting on the frontier to receive them; not however, as heretofore, in the open plain, but behind impregnable fortifications. The Cimbri did not



think it prudent to endanger their safety and the valuable booty they had gathered by abiding the issue of an encounter with a foe who was known

to be able to compensate materially for want of numbers by superior skill and strategy, and from whom, moreover, the choice of time for engagement could not be wrested. This people, therefore, separating from its allies, took the road for the far north, by way of Cisalpine Gaul, the Rætian Alps, and the Tyrol. The Teutons, however, less wise and more idly valiant, preferred to beard the Romans in their intrenchments, and halted for that purpose on the sands of the Carmargue, where Marius had formed a strong position, accessible only from the sea, by a canal which for ages bore the name of the Marian Fosse. Here they strove by all the eloquence of insolent bravado to tempt the foe from his lair. They roamed in bands around the walled camp, calling to the Romans to come forth and display their valour in battle; and, when at last their patience and provisions were exhausted, they moved off slowly and unwillingly from the presence of an enemy whom they contemptuously regarded as their rightful prey. Six days was this savage horde defiling before the astonished Republicans; during which the ears of the latter were incessantly assailed with execrations, taunts and revilings—the Teutons calling out in their uncouth tongue as they passed that they were bound for Rome, and would bear messages for the pent-up soldiers to their wives and daughters. Marius suffered them to depart unmolested; but, when their last squadrons had disappeared, he arrayed his legions for pursuit, and, silently watching his opportunity, fell upon them unexpectedly in the plain of Aquæ Sextiæ [102], where he routed them with immense slaughter. From the number of unburied dead left upon the field, the scene of this great victory acquired the name of Campi Putridi (now Pourrières); and the whitening bones of the Teutons, which still remain to attest at once the extraordinary stature of the race generally, and the number that must have perished in the encounter, have served for ages to form walls for the enclosures and supports for the vines of the neighbourhood.



From the time of Caius Marius, Transalpine Gaul became the arena in which the bold and ambitious sought to acquire renown, or to prepare the way for dominion. The warlike races by which the country was peopled were constantly at feud among themselves, and, as the Romans readily accepted the proffered alliance of any of the contending parties, excuses were seldom

wanting for their interference with the natives in their internal government, and in settling the constantly shifting boundaries of their territories—the price of every fresh instance of friendship from the Republic being an advance of frontier to her own now rapidly extending Province. As in the case of the Massylians, whose colony had latterly merged in the larger possessions of the Romans, the Gauls regarded the seizure of their lands, under whatever specious pretences, with a degree of bitterness which could not be always restrained from bursting into open hostility. But the superiority in knowledge and art of the invaders more than counterbalanced the greater number of their opponents, and the Gallic tribes, in consequence, were generally forced to succumb. So well known, nevertheless, was their disaffection and enmity to the conquerors, that when Catiline formed his design of overturning the Roman government, he fully counted upon their co-operation, and made special overtures to the Allobroges for their assistance. This tribe, however, distrusting his ulterior intentions, or doubtful of his success, or, perhaps, requiring the protection of the Senate against some rival clan, betrayed the correspondence of the conspirators, and thus, without benefiting themselves, assisted in perpetuating the power of their oppressors.

The disclosures made relative to this conspiracy hastened the subjugation of Gaul; for although the proposals of Catiline and his accomplices had been finally rejected, they had been so repulsed as to indicate doubt of the means, rather than aversion to the measures, suggested; and hence it became evident that the only guarantee for the future safety of the Roman Province was in the total humiliation of those from whom it had been originally won. It was speedily resolved, therefore, to effect the entire conquest of the country; and Julius Cæsar, with the prescience of genius, perceiving that it was there, and not in the Forum, that he might hope to win the mantle of the Dictator Sylla, abandoned to Pompey the ostentatious presidency of the Senate, and the defence of the Capitol, and, fixing himself at Milan, looked eagerly towards the Alps for the rising of his star of empire. Nor was it long before occasion offered for the commencement of his career of conquest.

Before Cæsar had yet quitted Rome as Prætor, a singular movement had begun among the Helvetians, a warlike Celtic tribe, the limits of whose territory were the Rhine, Mount Jura, Lake Leman, and the Rhone. Induced by the arguments of a powerful chief named Orgetorix, they had resolved to quit their own mountainous district, and, emigrating *en masse*, to obtain by arms a new settlement in the more fertile regions of Gaul. To enable them to carry this project into execution, they occupied themselves for the space of two years in amassing corn, cattle, and means of conveyance, and in endeavouring to establish a friendly intercourse with the neighbouring States; by that means to avoid molestation in their journey. Orgetorix is represented by Cæsar as having succeeded in prevailing on Casticus, Prince of the Sequani, and Dumnorix, King of the Ædui, not only to approve the expedition, but to take part in it, on having a share of the conquered

dominions assigned to them :—an arrangement, however, which so greatly displeased the Helvetii, that they brought Orgetorix to trial for treachery, and induced his death, whether by his own hand, or by poison privately administered, is uncertain. This dispute, though for a time it divided the Helvetians into two great factions, did not interfere with their main enterprise; but, all things having been prepared, the people, as if to steel their hearts by excluding all hope of return, set fire to their corn-fields, plantations, and dwellings, and, at the commencement of spring, [B. C. 57], set forth to the appointed rendezvous on the banks of the Rhone, whence they intended, by entreaty or force, to procure a passage through the adjoining territory of the Allobroges. The number who thus quitted their ancient homes, is stated, on the authority of some tablets graven by themselves, and afterwards captured by the Romans, to have been three hundred and sixty-eight thousand souls—men, women, and children, of whom ninety-two thousand were men, able to bear arms. In the conflagration which preceded this remarkable exodus, twelve towns, four hundred villages, and many detached dwellings are said to have been consumed; and the country was everywhere laid waste and desolate.

Cæsar, having been previously informed of their design, waited patiently at Milan till he knew they were in motion; then hastened with all the troops he could collect to Geneva, where he destroyed the bridge across the Rhone, and made active preparations for preventing the march of an enemy. The emigrants were for a moment daunted, and endeavoured to propitiate their opponent with fair words and presents; but, after a fortnight's futile delay—of which the Romans took advantage to construct a wall sixteen feet high, flanked with strong towers and protected by a deep trench, extending from Lake Lemman to Mount Jura, a distance of nineteen thousand paces—the Helvetii, hopeless of forcing the obstacles before them, changed their route, and sought to escape by the defiles which penetrate the region of the Sequani (now Burgundy). Here, as also in the neighbouring territory of the Ædui, the interest created in their behalf by the eloquence of Orgetorix, notwithstanding their disregard of the stipulations to which he had pledged them, appears to have procured them unopposed admission to the country; where, however, they were no sooner arrived, than they began to ravage the surrounding districts with as little remorse as if these had belonged to declared and implacable enemies. The plundered tribes, unable of themselves to contend with such powerful aggressors, had recourse for aid to the Romans, and Cæsar, having in the meantime ranged round his standard five additional legions from Cisalpine Gaul, marched with the utmost speed across the districts of the Allobroges and the Segusiani, and came up with the Helvetians on the Saône.

Three-fourths of the horde, by means of boats and imperfect rafts, had already passed the river; but of the remaining fourth, which was instantly attacked, the greater number were slain, and the survivors fled for concealment

and refuge to the neighbouring woods and ravines, where Cæsar left them unmolested, in order to pursue their main body, who were urging their march upon Tolosatium. The passage of the Saône had occupied the Helvetii three weeks; the Romans—who must, however, have had at hand the materials collected by their adversaries—accomplished the same task in one day. But as provisions were now growing scarce, and the inhabitants, suspecting that in Cæsar they had but found a new master, were becoming less communicative, the pursuit, from that point slackened and shortly afterwards stayed. The Gauls had caught a glimpse of the real nature of the contest waging upon their soil; and, recalling their natural affinity to the Helvetians, and their animosity to the Romans, they began to exclaim aloud, “The Helvetii are our brethren. Since we must needs submit, we had better yield to them than pass under the yoke to a people whose language, laws, and customs are strange to us.” Before any hostile measures, however, had been concerted by the tardy natives, the spreading disaffection among them was detected by Cæsar, and for the moment suppressed by the prompt seizure and imprisonment of Dumnorix, the Æduan, who had been foremost in promoting it. The Roman general hastened to complete the effect of this stroke of policy, by making the valour of his troops appear as conspicuous as his own sagacity. He overtook the enemy amid the mountains about Langres, and after a fierce engagement, lasting from dawn till sunset of a summer’s day, in which the olden reputation for courage and determination of the Helvetians suffered no diminution, the Romans were finally victorious, and such of the emigrants as had escaped the sword, were compelled to surrender as prisoners. These unhappy wrecks of a great nation were then marched back to their devastated country, commanded to rebuild the homes they had destroyed, and forbidden, on pain of death or slavery, to quit their national limits again without the sanction of their conquerors. Of the magnificent host which had originally assembled at the Rhone, but one hundred and ten thousand persons returned—and, these subdued and humiliated, to a howling and savage wilderness. Lest they should perish however of hunger, the Allobroges were directed to supply them with corn, till they should be able to rear food once more from their ruined fields.

The Celtic tribes—although heavy requisitions had been demanded from them for the maintenance of this war, and the ambitious object of the Romans in becoming their allies could no longer be mistaken—deemed it necessary to make a shew of gratitude to Cæsar for the expulsion of the Helvetii. They accordingly sent ambassadors to his camp to congratulate him on his triumph, and to tender him the thanks of all the chiefs and people of Gaul. At the same time they solicited his counsel and assistance under a still more imminent danger than that from which they had just been relieved.

Divitiacus, the brother of Dumnorix, the Æduan, speaking for the assembled heads of clans, informed the General the nature of their apprehensions. The Celtic nations had long been split into two great factions, each of whom

had maintained a stubborn contest for the sovereignty of the whole country. At length the Arverni, finding themselves unable to cope with their rivals, the *Ædui*, had sent across the Rhine, and engaged a numerous army of Germans or Goths to fight on their side for hire. These auxiliaries, having seen the fertility of the soil on which they had entered, "became enamoured of the lands, the produce, and the stores of their Gallic hosts," and refused to return home when the term of their services had expired. They chose for their peculiar settlement part of the district of the Sequani, whence they issued decrees imposing tribute and enforcing task-work upon the surrounding States. Ariovistus, the king or chief magistrate of these Suevan Goths, by his harsh and barbarous conduct had become a terror to the whole Celtic race. The Sequani in particular found their condition under his rule so desperate, that they expressed a settled determination rather to imitate the Helvetians, and seek a new home in a distant region, than longer submit to the intolerable oppression to which they were now subjected.

These feuds and complaints, which caused him to be regarded as arbiter of the destinies of Gaul, could not fail to be highly grateful to Cæsar, who thus saw the road to conquest smoothed for him by his victims. He at once espoused the cause of the suffering Sequani, and sent to Ariovistus—whom he had probably, in the first instance, incited to the acts of tyranny appealed against—to meet him at a stated time and place, that they might confer together on the subject. The proud Goth, construing this message into a command, and tenacious of his rights as a conqueror, refused obedience, saying that "If Cæsar desired anything of him, it behoved Cæsar to come to him." The Roman retorted by peremptorily forbidding Ariovistus to introduce more Germans into Gaul; by commanding him to deliver up the hostages retained by him for the fidelity of the *Æduan* and *Sequanian* chiefs; and by ordering that the Goths should make no more wars against the allies of the Romans. A stern defiance was the swift rejoinder; in which, while repudiating the authority of Cæsar, the fierce old Suevan reminded him that none had hitherto contended with Ariovistus without rushing upon their own destruction. The end was that the Gothic exactions from the helpless Gauls were redoubled.

Cæsar forthwith declared war against the Goths, and hastening forward by forced marches was enabled to throw a garrison into Vesontio (*Besançon*), the capital of the Sequani, before Ariovistus, who was also advancing thither, could bring up his forces. Here the Romans halted for a few days, during which the soldiers were utterly panic-stricken by the rumours of some itinerant merchants of the country, who reported that the Suevi were men of gigantic stature and strength, of great martial skill and valour, and of such fierce and hideous aspect that the Gauls were unable to sustain their looks. Such was the consternation in the camp of Cæsar at these tidings that every one made his will. Privates, centurions, tribunes, and even the proud *æquites* were prostrated with terror; and when orders were given for resuming the march, not a tent was struck, not a man stirred from his place in the ranks.

In a council which was immediately summoned to investigate the cause of this disobedience, the officers and soldiers sought to excuse themselves by affected fears of the difficulties of the march, the extent and number of the forests to be traversed, and the uncertainty of obtaining provisions by the way. Cæsar, however, unmoved by these representations, declared that if none besides would accompany him he would proceed with the tenth legion alone, of whose courage and fidelity he had no doubt, and whom he stated his intention to appoint as his Prætorian cohort. This address had so good an effect that not only the favourite legion expressed its readiness to follow him, but the rest of the troops, ashamed of their recent fears, desired him to afford them an opportunity of evincing their attachment to his person and their confidence in his discretion, by instantly leading them against the foe.

The whole army accordingly set forward, and, after seven days' severe marching, came within sight of the tents of Ariovistus, and endeavoured to bring him to an immediate engagement. The Goths however, contrary to their wont, declined the proffered battle, having been forewarned by their matrons and soothsaying women—who were held in great reverence and



esteem among them, and whose counsel was sought on all important occasions—that, if they ventured to give battle before the new moon, the Germans would assuredly be vanquished. It was fortunate, perhaps, for the Romans that Cæsar obtained timely intelligence of this prediction, as it enabled him

to turn the omen to his own advantage by attacking the entrenchments of the enemy and forcing him to an unwilling conflict. At the first attempt, nevertheless, the assailants were repulsed with loss, but on the second day, a general engagement being brought on, the Goths, after a desperate combat, were totally defeated. Those who escaped the slaughter of that dreadful fight, in which eighty-thousand Germans are computed to have perished, fled to the Rhine; nor did Ariovistus, their chief, conceive himself in safety till he had gained his natal bank of that sacred river. His two wives and a daughter were left among the slain, and another daughter fell a captive into the hands of the Romans.

This decisive victory, which firmly established the reputation of Cæsar among his own troops and the Celtic tribes, gave peace for awhile to distracted Gaul; but its results convinced the natives that in seeking for aid they had found a ruler. The first proceeding of the Republican troops was to fix their winter quarters in that very district of the Sequani from which they had expelled the Germans; and the subsequent tribute and exactions of the Romans were equally oppressive with those which had been deemed so unendurable when inflicted by the Goths.

But the Gauls, although too disunited among themselves to make head in any great enterprise against their new lords, were not prepared to surrender their independence without a struggle. Their social, political and religious institutions—all that was dear and sacred to them, spoke of the inestimable blessings of freedom, and the baseness of slavery: even the Romans, in rendering subjection a punishment, had inculcated the same lesson. It was to be expected, therefore, that the people would be as restless and discontented under their present masters as under the dominion of the Helvetians or the Suevi. Accordingly, ere the winter had worn away, rumours from time to time reached the ears of Cæsar at Milan that there were frequent assemblings of the Gallic clans in remote places, and constantly recurring conferences among their chiefs and the Druids, for the purpose of forming a general confederacy to free the country from the presence of foreigners. In this movement the Belgæ, who were the most formidable of the native races, were reported to be taking the most active part. Cæsar, ambitious of a conqueror's name, waited but for the first fine days of spring before he collected fresh levies in Cisalpine Gaul, and hastened across the Alps to commence a new campaign.

This rapid movement of the Romans disconcerted the plans of the Gauls, who, notwithstanding, hastily assembled an army of nearly three hundred thousand men, and advanced to meet them. The first encounter between the hostile forces took place on the banks of the Aisne; but the number and undisciplined bravery of the Belgæ availed little against the superior tactics of their adversary. Cæsar's troops, owing to the skilful arrangements of their commander, were enabled to attack the confused ranks of the enemy from secure positions, and, "without loss to themselves, to fill the whole space between sunrise and sunset with continuous slaughter." The defeated

Belgæ then laid down their arms, and the numerous tribes who had accompanied them to the war were suffered to depart home on giving hostages for their future submission. Still the spirit of freedom was not quenched within the Gauls. As one tribe yielded to the invaders and permitted the standards of Rome to be exalted on its territory, another tribe took arms in defence of its soil. During the summer of 56, the legions of the Republic had to contest almost every league of ground over which they advanced. The resistance of the Nervii alone, however, was of a formidable character. This clan brought into the field an army estimated at sixty thousand warriors, and fought with such determination that, at the end of the conflict, not more than five hundred are said to have remained alive and unhurt—while, of six hundred nobles who had led them, only three escaped slaughter.

While these things were transpiring in the north-east, Publius Crassus, having been sent with a legion to the west, succeeded in reducing to obedience the Veneti and six other maritime tribes, inhabiting the districts lying between the Seine and the Loire, and extending to the Ocean;—whose territory was all annexed to the Roman province. Entire Gaul was for the moment subdued; and, so great was the terror of Cæsar's name among the neighbouring nations, that even the Goths sent ambassadors to him across the Rhine, soliciting his favour, and offering hostages for their peaceable demeanour. The official detail of these important events, when read to the Senate at Rome, elicited from that body a decree for fifteen days of general thanksgiving in honour of the conqueror; “a circumstance,” says Cæsar, “which had happened to none before that time.”

As in the former year, while the Romans remained for the winter inactive in their cantonments, the hardier Gauls found leisure to form new combinations, and to concert new measures for throwing off the yoke of the oppressor. The degradation of servitude afflicted the whole Celtic people, and all rose once more, from the Rhine to the Atlantic, at the rallying cry of Liberty. The first intimation the Romans obtained of this insurrection was by the gathering among the Alps of a multitude of armed Gauls, and their successful attack upon a Roman fortress constructed for the protection of the passage into Italy. Cæsar himself was absent at the time in Cisalpine Gaul, but Sergius Galba, his lieutenant, by the timely withdrawal of his garrisons, and the destruction of all the corn and provisions in the neighbourhood, rendered it necessary for the tribes in that quarter to disperse.

In the west, however, the war was of longer duration, and assumed from the first a more serious aspect. The Veneti, from their ancient intercourse with the Phœnicians, were a much more civilized people than the rest of the Gauls, and possessing more wealth, from their commercial pursuits, they were proportionably overburdened with tribute. They had submitted to Crassus in the first instance, it appears, because they were unprepared for resistance; but no sooner had he withdrawn his forces than they began to fortify their towns, and to incite the surrounding clans to join them in revolt. When, therefore,

the Roman emissaries appointed to superintend the collection of taxes, arrived among them, though bearing the specious name of ambassadors, they were thrown into prison, and a message sent to Crassus that they should not be released till the Venetic hostages were permitted to return from their captivity. Crassus in vain endeavoured to subdue them a second time. It was necessary for Cæsar himself to take the command of his legions, and to exert all his knowledge of the art of war and all his ingenuity to overcome them. On land indeed they were invincible. Their towns were chiefly built on promontories or cliffs, jutting far into the sea, the access to which from the shore was too narrow for military operations, and their harbours were too exposed and shallow for vessels of burden to ride at anchor, or even for light barques, which had sailed in at flood, to stir from the sands at ebb tide. In some instances the Romans, by intense labour and perseverance, contrived to surmount the obstacles opposed to them by nature and art; but no sooner was their work completed, and victory seemed about to crown their toil, than the inhabitants, abandoning a position which had become untenable, embarked, with their effects, in ships hovering off the coast, which came at the least signal to their aid, and sailed for other ports, where they were sure of a welcome and a home.

In this useless acquisition of bare walls the Romans were occupied for several months—though, it must be added, not altogether idly, since they acquired in that time such experience of the enemy's tactics as led to their final success. Being baffled in all his attempts from the land, Cæsar resolved to attack the Veneti by sea. Collecting vessels, stores, and able pilots and rowers, therefore, from all the Gallic ports which owned his authority, he manned a large fleet with chosen troops, and entrusting the command of the expedition to his friend Brutus, anxiously watched for a favourable opportunity to bring the hostile squadrons into action. The battle that ensued was sharp, and hotly contested on both sides; and for several hours the issue appeared doubtful. Towards evening, however, Brutus caused the rigging of his opponents' vessels to be cut, and while they were thus disabled from manœuvring freely, and the decks were encumbered with fallen masts and sails, he boarded and overpowered them. The engagement lasted from four in the morning till sunset; and its result decided the fate of the Venetic war. It is revolting to be compelled to add that, in the hour of his triumph, Cæsar forgot alike the rights of humanity and the magnanimity of a hero. So exasperated was he against the brave people whose prolonged defence of their native independence had cost him so much anxiety, and gone so far to shake his reputation as a general, that, when they at last surrendered to his clemency, he put to death all their chiefs and men of dignity, and sold all of meaner rank—men, women and children—for slaves.

In Aquitania the insurrection was scarcely less formidable in appearance than in the maritime States of central Gaul. All the numerous tribes of this populous region had taken arms in what they considered the sacred cause of

their country; but wanting a bond of union and a recognized head among them, their efforts were desultory and feeble, and they were eventually attacked and conquered in detail by Crassus, who had been despatched against them by Cæsar from Armorica. Two or three clans, nevertheless, being aided by some veteran Spaniards, who had formerly served in the Roman army under Quintus Sertorius, and who were thus enabled to turn against the young lieutenant the knowledge they had gained among his countrymen, were able to create considerable consternation in the legions opposed to them. Their fortified camp, however, through some negligence of the defenders, was at last successfully assaulted, and a great number of the unhappy insurgents being put to the sword, the rest, with few and unimportant exceptions, submitted to the victors.

Cæsar himself, after the subjugation of the Veneti, though the summer was nearly spent, had advanced once more into the territory of the Belgæ, whose warlike tribes had already renounced the thrall so recently imposed on them, and were again in the field. For some time all the efforts of the Romans in this country were ineffective. As they advanced, their adversaries retired into the depths of their wild forests, whence they were able to make frequent excursions, and after putting many of the invaders to the sword, and ravaging the surrounding territory, to return laden with spoils to their fastnesses. The nature of the country, and the training and discipline of the Romans, rendered pursuit impracticable, while the hardier habits, less encumbered persons, and superior local knowledge of the natives, enabled them to maintain such a system of predatory warfare with comparatively little sacrifice or privation. The greater the resistance he experienced, however, the more necessary to the credit of Cæsar was the conquest of the tribes opposed to him; and all his energies were accordingly directed to the accomplishment of this object; but still without success, till the expedient was adopted of clearing the forests, so as to gain sufficient open space for the operations of the Roman army. This measure had the double effect of depriving the Belgæ of their accustomed shelter and concealment, and of enabling Cæsar to construct barriers behind which he could securely encamp for the winter.

It now became obvious that courage and perseverance were unavailing; and, all resource for subsistence, and all refuge from the inclemency of the season being cut off, the Gauls were forced to submit. So entirely humiliated were they, that, during the two following years, they were not only unable to resume an attitude of hostility, but were even fain to bear arms, at the bidding of their conqueror, against their neighbours and kinsmen the Germans, and also against the British Islanders, whose cause was identical with theirs, and on whom the sole pretext for war was their having assisted to repel the aggressions of the Romans.

From the date of the invasion of Britain, which was immediately followed by his attainment of the dignity of Consul, Cæsar seems to have considered his influence as established. He passed the winter [B. C. 53] at Lucca,

whither the greatest and noblest citizens of Rome resorted to honour him, with such submissive homage as must have convinced him how easy would be the transition from the style of a simple general to that of Dictator of the Republic. It was here that Pompey and the elder Crassus formed with him the memorable compact for the establishment of the Triumvirate, which assured to each the dominion of a third of the world. The exploits of the Conqueror of Gaul, meanwhile, were blazoned at Rome with all the embellishments which fanciful ignorance could invent. It was said that he had thrown a bridge across the Rhine, and thus made the passage to Britain; of which so little had been previously known, that the very existence of the island had not ceased to be a disputed question among the learned. The wonder and admiration of the populace were excited by the exhibition in the



Forum of several captive chiefs, one of whom, in order to display the riches and consequent importance of the new Province, was decorated with a collar formed of British pearls; and still further to render the name of Cæsar popular, and to pave the road for his greatest and last victory—that over the liberties of his country—his friends made frequent distributions in his name of corn and money; while Cicero, to show at once the extent of his wealth and munificence, laid out for him no less than one hundred millions of sesterii—nearly fifty thousand pounds, it is supposed, of modern value—in the purchase of land whereon to erect a palace in the midst of the Eternal city.

The fruitful source of this lavish expenditure was the plunder of the unhappy Gauls, who were not only stripped of their gold, jewels, and other

marketable properties, but even their wives and children were torn from them and sold as slaves, and their own blood was poured forth in torrents in the games of the circus, for the amusement of their inexorable vanquishers. It was impossible that such abject submission and such outrages should endure, among a race embued like the Celts with exalted notions of man's destiny and duties, longer than the degree of absolute force necessary to repress the swelling spirit of the people was maintained. The harvest of the year 53 had failed, in consequence of the drought and the unsettled state of the people; and Cæsar was obliged to distribute his legions over a wider extent of country than usual in order to find subsistence for the winter. This was deemed by the Gauls a favourable moment for a new attempt to regain their independance. Accordingly, about fifteen days after the Roman quarters had been established, the troops of Sabinus and Cotta, which were cantoned in the district of the Eburones, between the Meuse and the Rhine, were attacked on all sides by two powerful chiefs named Ambiorix and Cativulcus, and before they could procure aid from their countrymen, they were literally cut to pieces—Cotta and Sabinus being both among the slain. At the same time the Treviri assaulted the entrenched camp of Labienus, who, however, was enabled to defend himself until the arrival of succour; while the Nervii and Atuatici, encouraged by the success of the Eburones, and aroused by the exhortations of Ambiorix, “not to let slip the opportunity of freeing themselves for ever from subjection to the Romans, and taking vengeance for the injuries they had already endured,” mustered an army of sixty-thousand men, and suddenly surrounded the camp of Quintus Cicero, brother of the orator.

The straits to which Cicero was reduced by this unexpected outbreak have been graphically described in the ‘Commentaries.’ Having sent out messengers to request the return of Cæsar, who had not yet departed, according to his annual custom, for Cisalpine Gaul, the quæstor hastily commenced the building of a hundred and twenty moveable towers, in the construction of which, and in strengthening the ramparts around his position, the men worked unintermittingly day and night—not even the sick or wounded being permitted to abstain from labour. Stakes, burnt at the point, were prepared and planted in the trenches, mural javelins were got ready on the walls, and battlements and parapets, woven from hurdles, were so disposed as to impede the progress of an advancing enemy, and to protect the besieged from assault. Cicero himself, though in delicate health, would not spare a moment from warlike preparations, even for needful rest, till in a manner compelled to do so by the urgent entreaties of his soldiers.

The Gauls meanwhile were not idle. Their scouts captured and put to death the messengers of Cicero; and their army built a wall eleven feet high, and dug a ditch fifteen feet deep, around the Roman camp—being forced, for want of proper tools for the work, to cut the turf with their swords, to draw out the earth with their hands, and to use their short cloaks as baskets. So great, however, was their number and diligence, that in less than three hours

they completed the erection of a counter-line of fortification, fifteen thousand paces in compass; after which they hastened to construct towers—having scythes and mantelets for attack and defence—to enable them to overtop the enemy's rampart; and, this done, they proceeded vigorously to attack the camp. On one occasion they appear to have narrowly missed a victory. On the seventh day of the siege, the assailants having armed themselves with "red-hot balls of fusible clay" and heated darts, hurled these with slings and bows into the Roman quarters, and thus setting the huts of the soldiery on fire, the wind, which blew violently at the time, carried the flames through the whole encampment, and the buildings, the baggage, and the provisions of the garrison were destroyed. The conflict that ensued was bravely sustained for a long time on both sides; but when one of the towers of the besiegers was got into position for the assault, and ladders were placed for scaling the rampart, the Gauls appear to have been daunted by the intrepid bearing of their adversaries; and, the proper moment being lost, fortune smiled on them no more.

A dastardly Nervian of rank, named Vertico, on promise of honour and reward, had by this time eluded the vigilance of his countrymen—who, indeed, suspected no treachery in their own ranks—and conveyed intelligence to Cæsar of the imminent dangers which surrounded his lieutenant. To the quick-spirited Triumvir it was but the work of a few hours both to determine on his course, and to have troops in readiness to execute his decision. With a small army, collected on the spot, he set off for the territory of the Nervii, at the entrance of which he left his baggage and stores, under the protection of Crassus and a chosen legion, while he himself, with about seven thousand men, pushed on towards the beleaguered camp of Cicero.

Intelligence of this proceeding was speedily communicated to the Gauls, who immediately raised the siege in which they were engaged, and marched at once for their own frontier, in the hope of meeting and overwhelming the approaching foe before he should receive reinforcements or have time to prepare for their reception. Their movement, however, was not conducted with such celerity or silence but Cæsar obtained timely notice of it; and, while his adversaries were yet at some distance, he halted, chose his ground, and fortified a temporary camp. By the stratagem of apparent preparations for a flight, when an attempt was made next day to attack his position, the Gauls were induced to rush into the surrounding marshes, ravines and thickets, in order to intercept the expected fugitives, and while they were thus separated and disordered by the nature of the ground, which was impracticable for cavalry, in which lay their greatest strength, they were attacked in detail, and became an easy prey to the wily conqueror. But though partly subdued for the moment, the Gauls could not be again tranquilised that winter, during the whole of which Cæsar remained with his legions in their quarters, and confessed that he had not a moment free from distrust and anxiety. Throughout the land the indomitable clans were incessantly in motion, and public

assemblies were held in their sacred groves, and public resolutions made among them to prosecute the war till the Romans should be expelled the country. In several places the invaders and their adherents were attacked and put to the sword; and everywhere it was seen that they were regarded with general hatred by the natives.

Burning with impatience to avenge the losses he had sustained and the indignities he had suffered, Cæsar, as soon as spring appeared, advanced with a strong force into the forest of Ardennes, and falling upon the Eburones (dwelling in what now constitutes the neighbourhood of Liège), among whom the insurrection had commenced, he ravaged their territory with fire and sword; and, when glutted with massacre, he delivered the country a prey to general pillage and devastation. He was not content, indeed, with the mischiefs wrought by his own soldiers—whose semi-civilization, perhaps, tended to restrain their indulgence in the vilest extremes of outrage—but he caused proclamation to be made along the banks of the Rhine, that the district and its inhabitants were thenceforth at the mercy of all who chose to take advantage of their helplessness. The Germans—true Goths, as well in the modern acceptation of the word, as by descent—were not slow to avail themselves of so congenial a licence. The miserable Eburones, hunted down like wild beasts, were driven, to perish of hunger, cold, and nakedness, into the woods and morasses, or yielding themselves prisoners, were sold as slaves, or sent to writhe in the ignoble conflicts which gladdened the holidays of Roman citizens; while their towns and villages were destroyed, their fields laid waste, their cattle driven away, and their works of industry utterly ruined.

The alliance of the Romans with the Goths, nevertheless, had nearly cost the former dearer than they had anticipated. Two thousand Sicambrian horsemen having lost their booty in an attempt to cross the Rhine, on their return to their own country, and not wishing to depart empty-handed, retraced their steps into Gaul, where finding nothing of authorized pillage remaining, they resolved to assault the camp of Cæsar, and thence obtain some of the richer spoils which had been taken at the commencement of the war. Had this design been immediately put in execution, so little were the Romans prepared for attack from such a quarter that the result might have been serious; but some veteran legionaries, having learned the object of the barbarians, contrived to retard their movements and save their countrymen. The campaign ended with the annihilation of the Eburones; and Cæsar immediately afterwards departed for Cisalpine Gaul, where the gathering troubles of Rome itself rendered his presence necessary. His friends, in seeking to advance his interest, had overstepped the bounds of discretion; and, by prematurely disclosing his ambitious projects, had nearly put an end to his hopes of their accomplishment. The reduction of Gaul was thus delayed for a time, in order that the conquest of Rome might not be deferred when Gaul should be finally subjugated.

Meanwhile, a new insurrection, more terrible than any that had preceded

it, burst forth in the land of the Celts ; and, this time, the whole population united in the attempt to free themselves from foreign domination. All their previous efforts had been without concert ; and Cæsar had never wanted allies among the natives to assist in reducing their countrymen. At length, though too late for success, the chiefs and people had found that the welfare of all was the same, and that nothing but union in a general and determined struggle could afford them a hope of future freedom. Laying aside, therefore, all minor differences and family feuds, the several clans sent deputies from all parts of the country to a great Druidic assembly in the territory of the Carnutes (the Chartrain), and, after joining together in celebrating the religious rites with which such meetings were invariably opened, they took a solemn oath upon their standards, never to lay down their arms again till they had expelled the common enemy from Gaul, or perished in the attempt.

The signal for the outbreak was the massacre of the Roman merchants, who had established themselves at Genabum, (Orléans) ; and this having been given at the appointed time, a few days sufficed to put all the Celtic tribes in motion. The former atrocities of the Romans were now everywhere retaliated on themselves, and murder, pillage, and devastation were carried through the entire country—each party indulging in the worst excesses of rapine, as either obtained an opportunity of venting the deadly hate which animated the strife.

The chief of the Gallic confederation was Vercingetorix, a brave and powerful chief of the Arverni, in whose territory the war assumed its most formidable aspect. Their experience, however, had not yet been sufficient to teach the insurgents how much depended upon celerity of motion, and combination of action as well as of purpose. Instead of uniting their forces at once, and arranging a plan of operations to enable them to strike a decisive blow, they wasted their time and exhausted their strength and resources in petty encounters, which could have no other result than that of disqualifying them for extraordinary exertion, when such should be required by the exigencies of the moment. As an instance of this fatal tardiness, Vercingetorix had still his troops to collect from the district of the Bituriges (the neighbourhood of Bourges), when it was ascertained that Cæsar had rejoined his legions.

The Roman general, indeed, having received intelligence from his lieutenants of the proceedings of the natives, had posted across the Alps, re-assured the affrighted colonists of Narbonne and Massylia by his presence and exhortations, and passing the Cévennes, notwithstanding the roads being blocked up at the time with a fall of snow six feet deep, drew together, as if by enchantment, ten veteran legions, and hastened into the territory of the Arverni, where he committed the most awful ravages. The Gauls were defeated in every engagement, though never without exhibiting a degree of valour worthy of a better fate. In a conflict which took place at Lutetia, the site of the present city of Paris, the defenders of their native land, even after they must have been deprived of all hope of victory, could not be forced from

their position, "but every man," says Cæsar, "fought on till cut down where he stood." Nor were such acts of devoted heroism so uncommon as to elicit a single passing remark of eulogy or surprise from their narrator.

His forces being thinned by slaughter and discouraged by continual disasters, Vercingetorix was compelled to have recourse to the old expedient of his disunited countrymen—a desultory, partisan warfare. In this, his system was one which could not fail to inflict great hardships both on friends and enemies. He devoted the towns, villages and detached dwellings of his people to the flames, destroyed their cultivated fields and all stores of grain and provisions, and hoped, by creating a famine and reducing the country to a wilderness, to compel its evacuation by the Romans, who, more than the Gauls, were unable to exist in the midst of desolation. These measures, under the circumstances, were fraught with sound policy and prudence; but the chief who devised them, and who, as far as he had power, persisted in carrying them into effect, was not well supported by those upon whom the privations involved were likely to fall heaviest. Some of the tribes resolutely refused obedience to orders which seemed calculated to deliver them to the horrors of certain and universal starvation; and, on all sides, there was so much of demur and hesitation that Cæsar had time to extricate his legions from the perils by which they were surrounded before the course, which must inevitably have destroyed them, was generally understood and adopted. The Bituriges, though they burned twenty of their smaller towns in one day, were unwilling to destroy their capital, to which accordingly the neighbouring people flocked for refuge with their cattle and stores, and where, shortly afterwards, forty thousand of them were massacred by the Romans.

The character of the contest was too savage on both sides to continue long with the same ferocity with which it had commenced. Humanity, even that of the ancient Romans and Gauls, soon revolted at the series of outrages of which both parties were in turn the perpetrators and the victims, and, negotiations being blended with hostilities, the war gradually became less ruthless. But nothing definitive had yet been settled, when Cæsar, after a long triumphal march, came up with the main army of Vercingetorix, and, at the end of a stern conflict, forced him to retire for shelter beneath the strong walls of Alesia. Here occurred the last great struggle of the Gauls for national independence. The Celtic tribes, to the number of eighty thousand, being drawn up by their fearless leader on the slope of a mountain, half surrounded by the waters of two rivers, lost no time in fortifying their position. They threw up a circumvallation eleven thousand feet in extent, flanked by a deep ditch strongly embanked, in the manner of the Romans; then sending out horsemen in every direction, they caused announcement to be made to their compatriots, that, having provisions for a month, they would await the arrival of reinforcements, before attempting to put an end to the war. Cæsar, informed of all this by his spies, seems to have been alarmed at the unexpected prudence and skill of his opponents; and though, as retreat would

have entailed certain discomfiture on his soldiers, he had no alternative but to abide the issue, he yet took every precaution, by selecting a favourable position, and rendering it as strong as possible, by towers, walls, triple entrenchments, and chevaux-de-frise, to prevent the possibility of surprise, or irreparable defeat from a single assault. The labours of his troops, in completing the military works amid which he sat down, were little less arduous than those of the legions of Crassus in the territory of the Nervii. Every hand was in requisition—the honour, the safety, the very existence of every man was staked upon the diligence with which he executed the task assigned to him.

Before the end of the month of preparation prescribed by Vercingetorix, the arrival of two hundred and fifty thousand auxiliaries gave a fair prospect of victory to the Gauls. Cæsar remained cautiously within his fortifications; and there he was speedily assailed by his adversaries, who thought, no doubt, to carry his entrenchments by mere force of numbers. A whole day was spent in the attack and repulse; but so great was the loss of the Gallic host, and so little impression did their onset appear to have made on the firmness of the Romans, that at night they suddenly resolved to relinquish the struggle and disband. The cause for which they had originally leagued was necessarily thenceforth hopeless; and Vercingetorix, regarding it as such, and not caring to resume the predatory strife which he had formerly maintained with so little success, came next day to the camp of Cæsar and surrendered himself prisoner of war. The victor, who admired the enterprise, the courage and the talents of the gallant warrior, reserved him, as the noblest trophy he had won, to grace his triumph in Imperial Rome.

What remained to complete the conquest of Gaul was accomplished by mere marching and skirmishing rather than by serious battles. It will suffice to say that, wherever he still found opposition, Cæsar pursued his inexorable policy of intimidation; and that the subjugation of Gaul closed with the capture of Uxellodunum, where the conqueror caused to be cut off the right hand of every man, capable of bearing arms, within the fortifications. There is little doubt, however, that, had not other and what he considered higher aims interfered with his operations, he would have done something towards restoring prosperity to Gaul, and introducing such civilization as he was capable of imparting among her native clans, after having reduced the country to the condition of a Roman Province. But the disturbances of his native city, in which Liberty already lay prostrate and gasping at the feet of the military, recalled him to take part in the last struggle of the Republic, and to become the founder of a new, but, from its institution, infirm and despotic Empire.

The remainder of the acts of Cæsar belong to other Histories. His achievements in Gaul occupied him nearly ten years, during which, according to Plutarch, "he captured by storm more than eighty cities, subdued three hundred states or communities, and fought on various occasions with no less than thirteen millions of men—one million of whom were slain by his troops in battle, and another million taken prisoners and sold for slaves." From this

it will be readily inferred that the list of miseries which his reckless ambition caused to be inflicted was much larger than the catalogue of his glories and triumphs; and if, under the dispensation of Providence, he was an instrument in advancing the enlightenment of the nations he subdued, we must not forget



that this formed no part of the object which he proposed to himself, and was wholly subordinate to his great aim of winning a perishable renown and extending his individual power over his fellow-men. Tyranny, his friend Cicero has informed us, was esteemed by him as greatest of the Goddesses, and he was in the frequent habit of repeating a verse of Euripides to the effect that, if right and justice were ever to be violated, it was for the attain-

ment of sovereignty. The struggle of the Gauls, as far as it depended on endurance and valour, was a noble one, and worthy of the freedom for which it was so long maintained. But the disunion and occasional fickleness of the people frustrated all their endeavours, and left them at last a hopeless prey to the oppressor, and a warning to the patriots of all succeeding times.

From the departure of Cæsar till the fall of the Roman Empire, Gaul, deprived of its nationality, has no local and distinct history. The humiliated natives, no longer able to offer effective resistance, sought merely to procure favourable terms from their conquerors; and the names of the separate tribes and territories were gradually lost in those of the Colonies and Provinces into which the country was divided. The laws of Rome immediately superseded those of the Druids, and classical Polytheism became, though more slowly, mingled with the ancient worship of one God. The Emperor [Augustus expressly forbade to Roman citizens the practice of the Celtic rites; but it was not till the reign of Tiberius that Druidism was universally prohibited. The human sacrifices offered by the priests was the specious cause assigned for this abolition, but its true motive must be sought in the dangerous influence exercised by the ministers of religion over the populace, who were constantly reminded, in the public assemblies, of the deeds of their heroic ancestors, of the former glories of Gaul, and of the freedom which had passed away from their soil. There are obscure traces of the peaceful existence of the old superstition for several ages afterwards; but this was in the more secluded districts of the country, and was probably limited to those who had nothing to fear from the resentment, and nothing to hope from the favour, of the Roman governors.

Gaul itself was divided—it is believed by Augustus—into sixteen Provinces, each of which was ruled by a Proconsul or President, accountable only to the supreme authorities of Rome. These offices were generally bestowed upon the Imperial favourites or familiars, as places of profit rather than of honour; and, as the powers they conferred were almost unlimited, the governors usually filled their brief term of service with such acts of rapacity and extortion as

must, by draining the resources of the country, have materially retarded the progress of civilization among the inhabitants. Every thing was taxed to the highest. Tithes of the produce were demanded; and besides these, heavy rates were imposed upon arable land, upon pasture, upon vineyards and orchards, upon cattle and commerce, and on the aggregate amount of population; and, being leased at high yearly rents to farmers-general, they were exacted with the utmost severity, and were a fruitful source of oppression and misery. The people too were subjected to a harsh conscription, under which their young men were forcibly enrolled in the legions of the conquerors, and compelled to assist in subverting the liberties of other nations. Whether this despotic system—according to the opinion of M. Guizot, who believes, with his countryman Dubos, that none but freemen possessing some wealth were liable to the payment of tribute—was less grievous to those who lived under it than the administration which it supplanted, cannot now be ascertained; but it is at least certain that the Gauls were more discontented with its operation, and that, on many occasions, they attempted, though vainly, to throw off their heavy yoke, by partial insurrections, and the massacre of those whom they appear to have never very generally regarded otherwise than as enemies.

The arts, literature and industrial improvements introduced into Gaul by the Romans afforded, however, some compensation for the evils of their domination, and the political and religious thralldom they imposed. They taught the natives to construct more commodious dwellings, and to raise better towns and cities, adorned with temples, palaces, public buildings, courts, baths, theatres, markets, and places of amusement. They introduced a new system of agriculture, and naturalised many exotic plants and shrubs, together with several new species of fruit-trees and vegetables, and some new varieties of animals for food or other service. Before the Roman invasion good roads were unknown in Gaul. It was a primary object of the conquerors to maintain a constant and direct communication with their Capital, and between one military post and another; and for this purpose they constructed roads of such durability that the lapse of eighteen centuries has not only not obliterated their traces, but in many cases has left them in almost perfect preservation, to attest to ages yet unborn the care, skill, and industry employed in their formation. Colleges and schools were founded in all the towns where Roman garrisons were established; and it was part of the policy of the victors to encourage in the natives a taste for the Latin language and literature, as a means of acquiring dominion over their minds as well as their persons. Nor do the Gauls seem to have been unapt pupils. Tacitus bears ample testimony to their proficiency in the liberal arts, and Juvenal, in one of his Satires, has represented the pleaders of Britain as deriving their professional instruction from "eloquent Gaul;" while, in literature, the names of a number of Gallic natives are found among those distinguished for their learning and acquirements during the latter ages of Roman supremacy.

But perhaps the most important of all the importations of the Romans was

that of Christianity. The date of its introduction into Gaul has not been ascertained; but it is generally admitted to have been during or immediately after the Apostolic age. Its progress in winning converts was doubtless accelerated by its resemblance, in some essential particulars, to the earlier faith inculcated by the Druids, which, though discredited by the Romans, was still held in considerable esteem among the natives. This peaceful religion, in Gaul, as indeed in every nation where it has gained a footing, had a speedy effect in softening the public manners, and in imparting a higher tone of feeling and a more exalted idea of humanity to its disciples than had previously existed. And when the inroads of warlike barbarians threatened to replunge Europe into chaotic ignorance, the professors of Christianity were the instruments of preserving and gathering up the scattered seeds of civilization, and of nurturing them into the goodly fruits of modern refinement and freedom.

The crowd of historic events which merely transpired in Gaul during the troubled existence of the Roman Empire may be passed in brief review, omitting all notice of the perpetual wars, revolts and changes of government, except only such as were likely to have left a strong impression upon, or were calculated to affect the permanent character, of the people.

The fate of several of the Emperors, and many of the pretenders to the Imperial crown, was decided on the territory conquered by Cæsar. It was here [A. D. 78.] that Caius Julius Vindex, a native of Gaul, descended from the ancient chiefs of the Aquitani, who had adopted the manners and been admitted to the privileges of a citizen of Rome, gave the first impetus to the popular indignation which hurled Nero from his throne. Disgusted with the exactions which the Emperor compelled him to demand as Governor of Celtic Gaul, from his countrymen, Vindex, having assembled the people together, publicly denounced to them the vices, cruelties and crimes of the tyrant, and exhorted them to arm themselves and combine, not to shake off the fetters of Rome, but for the dethronement of their oppressor. The grateful call was obeyed with alacrity, and Vindex was soon at the head of an army of one hundred thousand men; but Rufus, a Roman general attached to Nero, advancing against him before his forces could be properly disciplined, he was overthrown with great loss, and, after the custom of the Romans, put an end to his own life. He had not spoken in vain however. The Romans themselves, aroused by the example of the brave Gaul, took arms against the monster whom they had suffered too long to disgrace the purple, and put an end at once to his ignominious reign and existence. The Gauls moreover were among the first to recognise the authority of Septimius Severus, after his army, on the murder of Pertinax, had saluted him with the title of Augustus. Severus had formerly been governor of the Province of Lyons, and had endeared himself to the inhabitants by his mild administration. It was in the territory of the Lyonnese, in the plain of Trevoux, where he obtained the victory over his rival, Clodius Albinus, Governor of Britain, which gave him undisputed possession of the Imperial sceptre. In the reign of this

Emperor [A. D. 202] the first persecution of the Christians in Gaul was instituted; when, among others who perished, was the learned and devout Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons.



When the capture of Valerian by Sapor, the son of Artaxerxes, and the imbecility of Gallienus, his successor, threatened the Roman empire with premature dissolution, the Province of Gaul assumed the rank of an independent Empire, and maintained its position as such for a considerable period. The virtuous Posthumus, one of its sovereigns, was killed at Mayence by his troops, for refusing to give up that city to plunder, after the defeat of a competitor for the crown; and Victorinus his friend and associate was soon afterwards slain for his vices at Cologne. Aurelian reunited Gaul to the great Empire; and at his subsequent triumphal entry into Rome, exhibited, among a long train of distinguished captives, taken in his many victories, the Gallic Emperor Tetricus, dressed in the braccæ of his country, a saffron tunic, and a purple robe, and followed by the beautiful and heroic Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra and the East, fainting under the weight of jewels and golden fetters with which she was adorned—walking before a chariot of which the magnificence dazzled even the wealthy and luxurious Romans.

After the death of Aurelian, the Empire was again distracted both by intestine commotions and the incursions of numerous barbarian nations from the North. Gaul had been a prey to the occasional ravages of the Germans ever since the expulsion of Ariovistus, and many of that people had obtained settlements west of the Rhine, while the country was held in subjection by the Romans—notwithstanding the efforts of the latter, by the construction of a line of fortresses from the mouth of the Rhine to that of the Danube, and the establishment of strong garrisons along the frontier, to repel them. About the 240th year of the Christian era, the periodical invasions of the Gothic tribes rapidly assumed a more formidable character. Instead of advancing in detached bands as formerly, they swarmed by whole nations, leagued together for the common object of plundering the wealthier provinces of their neighbours. They had been at first known by the general appellations of Goths and Germans; but, on better acquaintance, they came to be distinguished by their more specific names of Allemanni, Goths, Vandals, and Franks. Whence these several races originally emigrated has afforded matter for much speculation, but without leading to any satisfactory conclusion. All that can be ascertained concerning them is that they were located in different portions of Germany at the period when the first notices of them occur in

historic records. The Vandals, embracing the Heruli, Bourguignon (Burgundian), and Lombard tribes, were then settled on the banks of the Oder, and along the sea-coasts of Mecklenburg and Pomerania; the Goths, divided into Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Gepidæ, were established in the territory afterwards formed into the modern kingdoms of Poland and Prussia; the Allemanni, who were a confederacy of Suevan tribes, occupied the country between the Oder and the Danube; and the Franks, who were a mingled race of Catti, Chamavi, Sicambri, Bructeri, Cherusi, and Salians, inhabited the extensive tract between the Rhine and the Weser.

The whole of these people differed materially, in language, religion, manners, and laws, from the Celtic Gauls. They were destitute of all the elegant, and most of the useful arts of life. They had no cities or fortresses, which indeed they affected to despise, as places of confinement rather than security; and the huts in which they dwelt were of the most primitive construction, and erected without reference to the convenience or contiguity of any which might have previously occupied the vicinage. The men, in the remote districts, wore garments made of skins, and the women manufactured, for their own use, a coarse kind of linen. In the territories bounding the Roman provinces, the equipments of a soldier were similar to those of the Imperial legions—light



armour, a short tunic, sandals, a spear, a sword, and a shield. Game, the flesh of their numerous herds, and a scanty supply of corn, furnished their food; and the little traffic that existed among them was carried on by the exchange of commodities. War was the chief occupation and the most gratifying amusement of all classes; who in the dull intervals of peace found no excitement save in the chase, and in excessive drinking and gaming. Every warrior was a freeman of his tribe, and had a voice in all matters of government and legislation. The chiefs and magistrates were elective, and had no power to punish with death, to imprison, or to chastise a freeman, without the sanction of his fellow-citizens. The women of Germany, contrary to the

general usage of uncivilized people, were treated with great esteem and confidence, consulted on every matter of importance, and believed to retain in their bosoms a degree of sanctity and wisdom greater than belonged to men; and, as chaste and faithful heroines, they seem to have deserved unbounded respect. They accompanied their sons, husbands, and fathers to battle, animated them to the fight, cheered them in the moment of conflict, and dressed their wounds, or rewarded them with caresses when it was over. By the whole race, death was deemed preferable to servitude. They believed in a future state of rewards and punishments; worshipped the Sun, the Moon, Fire, and the Earth, and were enthusiastic lovers of poetry and music.

Of the Franks, says Gibbon, "the love of liberty was the ruling passion; the enjoyment of it their best treasure; the word that expressed that enjoyment the most pleasing to their ear. They deserved, they assumed, they maintained, the honourable epithet of Franks or Freemen; which concealed, though it did not extinguish, the peculiar names of the several States of their confederacy. Tacit consent and mutual advantage dictated the first laws of the union, which was gradually cemented by habit and experience." The first appearance of the Franks in Gaul, on which they were destined to confer a new name, is believed to have been in the reign of the Emperor Gordian, but on that occasion they had been driven beyond the Rhine again with loss. A few years later they made another inroad upon the Roman province, and, finding it almost barren, traversed it, with little impediment, to the foot of the Pyrenees, and thence passed into Spain, which they continued to ravage during the greater part of the reign of Gallienus. Such was the havoc they wrought in that wealthy country, that, down to the fifth century, wretched huts, scattered amid the ruins of magnificent cities, still attested the fierce conflict they had waged with the inhabitants; and when the Spanish people could no longer yield a sufficient supply of plunder, the Franks, seizing their vessels, transported themselves into Mauritania, and desolated the coasts of Africa, as they had done those from which they had departed. The third expedition was that made on the assassination of Aurelian, by the Vandals, Franks, and Lygians—a brave tribe, who appear but this once in the page of history—in conjunction. The brief reign of Tacitus afforded no time to repulse the aggressors, and they were enabled to obtain possession of seventy of the most flourishing cities of Gaul. Probus, however, not long after his election to the throne, crossed the Alps, and attacking the invaders drove them back into



their woods and morasses, happy to escape with the loss of all their booty. This excursion is said to have cost the barbarians four hundred thousand lives.

Not content with defeating the invaders, Probus followed them into their own territory, reduced nine of their principal chiefs to obedience, imposed on them a heavy tribute of corn, cattle, and horses, constructed a high and strong wall of stone, two hundred miles long, in order to serve as a barrier against future emigrations, and drafted large numbers of the inhabitants into other provinces, where many of them were induced to make peaceful settlements. A memorable party of these captives was established on the coast of Pontus, with a view of strengthening the Imperial frontier against the assaults of the Alani—a fierce Scythian tribe who had wandered from the confines of Tartary, to pillage the shores of the Euxine. Displeased with their new home, the Frankish colonists seized a number of merchant vessels in one of the ports at hand, and venturing out to sea, resolved to explore their way to the Rhine. The supineness of the Roman fleets suffered them to escape through the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, whence cruising along the Mediterranean they gave loose to their passions for revenge and plunder in ravaging the cities and towns of Asia, Greece and Africa. After sacking the city of Syracuse in Sicily, they presented themselves with insolent bravado under the walls of Carthage, and coasting thence round Spain and Gaul, found their way back to the seat of their tribe. This successful voyage must have taught the Franks what they might hope to obtain by daring enterprise. It ought at the same time to have warned the Romans of their weakness, and have led to the adoption, or at least the trial, of some instant remedy. But while the former profited by the lesson, the latter despised it.

In the year 286, the Gallic peasantry, ground down by intolerable oppression, rose in revolt, under the appellation of Bagaudæ, against their tyrannical masters. They delivered their villages and open towns to the flames, and pursued the course of wild excess which usually marks the outbreak of an infuriated mob. The Emperor Maximian deemed it necessary to take the field in person against this ruthless foe, and after crushing their power in the plains of St. Maur and Charenton, found that he had next to encounter a host of Burgundians and Allemanni, who had taken advantage of the popular confusion to plunder the frontier.

About the same time a new enemy began to appear on the coasts of Gaul. These were the celebrated Scandinavian rovers called Saxons. Their first descent was on the Belgic coast, where their incursions were favoured by official rapacity. Carausius, who had the command of the Roman fleet commissioned for the protection of the British and Gallic coasts bordering on the channel, hoping for impunity from the disorders of the Empire, connived at the passage and disembarkation of the pirates, but diligently intercepted them on their return, and despoiling them of their plunder, appropriated it to his own use. Maximian, informed of his treachery, sought to bring him to punishment. Carausius revolted, purchased the allegiance of his marine legionaries and the assistance of the defeated Saxons, caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor at Gessoriacum (Boulogne), secured the alliance of

the Franks by ceding to them the Batavian Isles, and, sailing over to Britain, set his pursuers at defiance.

Constantius Chlorus, the associate of Maximian in the Empire, three or four years subsequently [298] reduced Britain to obedience, and chased the Franks from their settlement; but he was immediately afterwards assailed by a numerous horde of Allemanni, who, as he was traversing the open country with a feeble guard, unexpectedly surrounded him. He retreated with difficulty to Langres, the affrighted citizens of which refused to open their gates, and Constantius escaped only by being drawn up the wall with cords. The Roman soldiers hearing of the adventure, hastened to the town from all sides, and before night the Allemanni were defeated with the slaughter of six—some affirm sixty—thousand of their warriors. The victory of Vindonissa followed, and the Allemanni finally found safety in flight. In the winter however they returned unexpectedly to the charge by passing the Rhine on the ice; but a thaw coming on suddenly and cutting off their retreat, they, in consternation, surrendered themselves prisoners the moment an enemy appeared to check their progress. The captives were distributed as slaves among the districts which they had in great part depopulated—Beauvais, Cambray, Trèves, Langres and Troyes—where they were employed as husbandmen and shepherds, and denied the use of arms. Constantius died in 306, at Eboracum (York), in Britain, and was succeeded by his son Constantine, afterwards called the Great.

This young prince was speedily recalled to Gaul by new invasions of the Germans, and the domestic troubles of the Roman Empire. At Arles, where his court was then held, he married Fausta, the daughter of Maximian, and shortly afterwards proceeded to the Rhine to chastise the increasing insolence of the Franks. Hence he was hastily summoned by news that his father-in-law had usurped his throne, and, after capturing the old man at Marseilles, and condemning him to death, he returned once more to engage the barbarians, over whom he obtained a signal victory. Two princes and several chiefs of the Franks were made prisoners on this occasion, and exposed by order of the Emperor to contend with wild beasts in the amphitheatre of Trèves. About three years later, one hundred and fifty thousand Germans passed the Rhine, to avenge the cruelty inflicted on their countrymen, but they were met and defeated by Constantine, who, it is said, obtained secret admission into their camp, and gathered there the information which secured to him an easy victory. For some years subsequently Gaul was freed from war and foreign rapine. As an evidence of the misery, however, which had been produced by the constant incursions of the barbarians, it may be mentioned that the Emperor found it necessary to remit all arrears of tribute from the territory of Autun, and to reduce the taxation in that district more than a fourth—the inhabitants being too poor to pay the heavy Roman imposts, and many of them preferring to live as exiles and outlaws rather than support the burdens to which they were on all sides subjected.



At the death of Constantine, in 337, disputes arose among the imperial family. Constantine II. was opposed, defeated, and slain by his brother Constans, who in turn was dethroned and murdered by Magnentius one of his officers, and he again was overthrown by Constantius II. and died by his own hand. These struggles for empire were of considerable importance to the History of Gaul, as giving occasion for new inroads of the German tribes. While yet the power of Magnentius was such as to hold the legitimate sovereign in suspense, Constantius had invited a numerous swarm of Franks and Allemanni across the Rhine, by presents, promises of spoil, and a perpetual grant of the territories they might conquer. Sylvanus, an able Frankish leader, having accepted the terms, rendered considerable services to the Emperor; but when the war had ceased, Constantius, anxious to be released from his obligation and the presence of his dangerous allies, contrived to fasten a quarrel on their General, and procured him to be assassinated. Exasperated by this perfidious treatment, the Germans hastened to avenge it; and crowding the banks of the Rhine, the Moselle and the Meuse, pillaged Tongres, Cologne, Trèves, Worms, Spire, Strasburg, and thirty-nine other flourishing cities, most of which they reduced to ashes [A. D. 355.]. Alsace and Lorraine were overrun by the Allemanni, and the Franks regained possession of the Batavian Isles and an extensive district of Brabant, then known as Toxandria, which according to

Gibbon "deserves to be considered as the original seat of their Gallic monarchy." The German conquests along the Rhine extended above forty miles to the west of that river, over a country chiefly peopled by their own tribes, while their devastations reached three times farther than their conquests, and at a still greater distance, the plains and villages were deserted, and the land left uncultivated by the enervated and panic-stricken natives.

Constantius—whose jealous cruelty had induced him to destroy nearly all the members of his own family, and whose crimes, but above all his pusillanimity and vanity, had disgusted most of the friends on whom he might have relied—turned his eyes, at this crisis, on his cousin Julian, since surnamed the Apostate, the only surviving male, excepting the emperor himself, of the numerous issue of Constantius Chlorus. Julian, who was but six years of age when his father, Julius Constantius the Patrician, was murdered, had been brought up in exile and confinement, and initiated in the studies of philosophy, instead of the more princely exercise of arms, or the art of government. When called upon, at the age of twenty-five, to quit his retirement and appear at court to be invested with the dignity of Cæsar, the order was obeyed with unfeigned reluctance, added to a lurking fear that a pretext only was required to consign him to the same fate as had been awarded to his father and his brother. The necessities of Constantius for his aid, however, were real. The Empire was tottering, and required firm and judicious support to give it even a chance for prolonged existence. The Government of Gaul had become one of great difficulty and danger; and as the preservation of the Province was of the utmost consequence to the Empire, to Julian, whose talents were not unknown to his uncle, was assigned the task of delivering the country from its invaders.



From Milan, where he had received the purple, Julian departed, with a feeble escort, on his high mission, learning, by the way from the books

which he carried with him as much as possible of the new arts which he was forthwith to put in practice. War was not then so difficult a science as it has since become, and even in recent times, more than one man has acquired the laurels of conquest with little previous preparation for the task, and statesmanship has been treated as a matter of intuition. Julian had several months' leisure to inform himself of the duties of a General and a Governor; and the severe discipline which he adopted was admirably calculated to fit him for the hardships of a campaign. "The simple wants of nature," says one of his modern panegyrists, "regulated the measure of his food and sleep. Rejecting with disdain the delicacies provided for his table, he satisfied his appetite with the coarse and common fare which was allotted to the meanest soldiers. During the rigour of a Gallic winter, he never suffered a fire in his bed-chamber; and, after a short and interrupted slumber, he frequently rose in the middle of the night, from a carpet spread on the floor, to dispatch any urgent business, to visit his rounds, or to steal a few moments for the prosecution of his favourite studies."

Early in the spring he hastened towards the centre of Gaul, where the Roman troops were in greatest strength, and the districts of which were most threatened by the Germans. As he advanced from Autun, at the head of a small body of heavy cavalry and archers, he was often assailed by straggling bands of the Allemanni, but he invariably opposed to them a bold front, regardless of their numbers, and after being successful in several petty encounters, reached Rheims in safety; then taking the command of his main army, he lost no time before marching in search of the enemy. The first year, although it gave two or three victories to Julian, produced nothing decisive; and when the legions were compelled to retire to their winter quarters, the country was still exposed in almost every part to the ravages of the barbarians. But the studies of a second winter enabled the young chief to arrange maturer plans for the next campaign; and although, when assailed at Strasburg, he was only indifferently supported by about fourteen thousand men, while the army of Chnodomar, his antagonist, numbered thirty-five thousand of the bravest German tribes, the Cæsar obtained a signal victory, with the loss of but four tribunes, and two hundred and forty-three soldiers. The Allemanni in this engagement lost six thousand men on the field, without reckoning those who were drowned or transfixed with javelins and arrows in attempting to escape across the Rhine. Chnodomar, and three of his chiefs, fell prisoners into the hands of the Conqueror; and the Provinces of the Upper Rhine were restored to tranquillity.

The Allemanni being thus expelled, Julian turned his arms against the Franks, who were in possession of the cities and towns bordering on the German Ocean and the Lower Rhine. These people both from their valour and their numbers had always been esteemed the most formidable of the barbarians. Rapine is said to have had less charms for them than war

itself, which, as its successful pursuit conferred the highest honours, was capable, under all circumstances, of yielding the greatest felicity to those engaged in it. The minds and bodies of the Franks, were so completely inured to the hardships of war by perpetual action, that it was affirmed "the snows of winter were as pleasant to them as the flowers of spring." The Roman Generals had latterly been unwilling to cope with such adversaries, except when compelled to do so in their own defence; and the barbarians naturally attributed their growing want of energy to national degeneracy and cowardice. They were astonished therefore to learn, in the middle of December, that an army was advancing against them, not led by a veteran, but by a young man who, on entering upon the office of a general, had the art of war to learn.

The first exploit of Julian in this winter expedition, was the capture of two strong fortresses on the Meuse, into which six hundred Franks had thrown themselves for security; and soon afterwards, extending his legions from Cologne to the ocean, and cutting off all means of support from the enemy, he brought them to sue for clemency, and to promise obedience to their conqueror. The Chamavians were ordered to retire to their old habitations beyond the Rhine; but the Salians were permitted to retain their new possession of Toxandria in Belgium, as tributary subjects of the Roman Empire. The Cæsar then conducted his troops across the Rhine, and inflicted upon the Germans themselves the miseries and ravages of invasion—burning their huts and villages, seizing their corn and stores, and driving away their cattle and helpless inhabitants. The vanquished, descending from the haughty language of victorious aggressors, in the most submissive and abject manner now implored for peace, and, after what he deemed a sufficient humiliation, Julian granted their petition.

An interval of repose having been thus obtained, the Governor diligently employed himself in restoring the ruined cities and towns of Gaul, and in establishing fortified posts along the frontier, to restrain the future inroads of the barbarians. The tillage of the country, which had long been interrupted, was next attended to, and, in order that the hardships experienced in former years from scanty harvests might be ameliorated, he fitted out six hundred large vessels to fetch corn and other produce from Britain, to serve until the time of the next harvest. The terror of the name of Julian was sufficient of itself to prevent interruption to his vessels from the Frankish and Saxon pirates, both in their voyages between Gaul and Albion, and in their passage up the Rhine to distribute their freight, though Constantius his uncle had vainly offered a tributary present of two thousand pounds of silver for the free and secure navigation of the Rhine alone. Besides agriculture, the prince revived and encouraged the manufactures and commerce of the natives; and the civil corporations which had been instituted at an early period of the Roman domination, now first became useful in promoting the welfare of the Province. Julian seems to have been the first of the Roman chiefs in Gaul

who fixed his residence [A. D. 358], at Paris (then Lutetia), to which he was a great benefactor, and which he ever afterwards regarded with peculiar satisfaction and esteem. The olive, the vine and the fig-tree were successfully cultivated throughout the country, the local administrations were everywhere reformed, the taxes were reduced, and justice was administered with impartiality in every district. The enemies of the Empire feared, and its friends—among whom the Romanized Gauls must now be numbered—venerated the wisdom, liberality and consummate policy of the philosophic Julian.

The popularity of the Cæsar, however, was a source of natural disquietude to the Emperor, who, in the virtues and important services of his minister, discerned only concealed and dangerous ambition. Constantius, who, by the aid of assassins had made Julian a friendless orphan, could never wholly divest himself of a fear that his crimes would at some day be sternly punished; and when he heard of the victorious progress of his nephew, of the conciliatory measures pursued towards the provincials, and their consequent attachment to their benefactor, and above all of the devotion to the young chief's person manifested by the army, he instantly sought occasion for diminishing a power from which he had so much to apprehend, by withdrawing a number of the troops by which alone that power, and any ulterior pretensions it might have suggested, could be maintained. The tranquillity of Gaul and the Persian threat of invading the Eastern Provinces afforded the requisite pretext. An order was despatched from Constantinople for detaching four entire legions from the command of Julian, and transporting them with all speed to the frontiers of Persia. The fatal consequences of this mandate were foreseen as well by the soldiers as their general, the moment it was communicated; and after some deliberation the troops not only refused to march, but proclaimed their leader Emperor. Julian at first refused to accept the dangerous dignity, but at last, on the repeated assurance "that if he desired to live he must consent to reign," and at the urgent entreaties of his friends, he suffered himself to be exalted on a shield amid the acclamations of his army, decorated with a diadem formed from a rich military collar—probably the spoil of some German chief—and to be saluted as Augustus [A. D. 360]. This revolution had cost no bloodshed, and happily it was not destined to cost any.

As soon after his elevation as the season permitted, Julian once more took the field against the Franks, who, in hopes of profiting by the division of the Empire, had broken the treaty extorted from them, and recommenced their incursions upon the Gallic territory. He threw a bridge over the Rhine in the neighbourhood of Cleves, and by a laborious march through a country, which had hitherto been deemed inaccessible, reduced the enemy to obedience, and having strengthened the frontier by new fortifications, completing the line from Cleves to Basil, returned through Besançon, which had suffered severely from the ravages of the invaders, and took up his quarters in (French) Vienna. The Germans were at this time completely prostrated. Vadomair, a chief of the Allemanni, was the only enemy from whom Julian

could apprehend danger, and to adopt the phraseology of Gibbon, "he condescended to surprise that prince by his own arts." Vadomair having incautiously accepted an invitation to a banquet given by the new Emperor, was seized in the midst of the entertainment, and forthwith sent prisoner into Spain; while Julian, calling together his legions, crossed the Rhine, and carried the terrors of his name once more into the heart of the Gothic territories.

Constantius meanwhile, trembling with alternate rage and fear, was breathing vows of vengeance against his rebellious nephew, for the chastisement of whom he was already on his way with an immense army from the East. He deigned, however, in the midst of his fury to write a haughty letter to Julian, commanding him to renounce his style of Augustus, to relinquish the civil and military government of Gaul to the officers of the Imperial Court, and to trust for pardon of his treason to the clemency of his uncle. "It was Constantius," said the writer, "who invested the Cæsar with the honours of the purple, educated him with so much care and tenderness, and preserved him in his infancy, when he was left a helpless orphan." This insolent missive was too much even for the patient stoicism of Julian. "Orphan!" exclaimed he when the letter was read. "The son of Constantine urges me to avenge the injuries which I have so long endeavoured to forget. The hatred, contempt and resentment of twenty years, spring forth at once to reproach me for having so long delayed to avenge the murder of my race." From this time Julian, abandoning the Christian religion in which he had been educated, but which he does not appear at any time to have believed, and which was the more obnoxious to him because it was the professed creed of his enemy, devoted his life and his services to the "Immortal Gods," whence his surname of *Apostate*. The death of Constantius a few months afterwards prevented the civil war which seemed inevitable; and Julian, without further opposition, was recognised as Emperor of the Roman world.

The death of the Apostate was a signal for the renewal of the German invasions, and thenceforward, till it had been split into independent monarchies, Gaul enjoyed but rare and brief intervals of peace. In the reign of Valentinian, Theodosius, father of the Emperor of that name, obtained several partial victories over the Franks; and Gratian was completely triumphant in a campaign against the German nations generally. But the intestine dissensions of the Romans prevented the prosecution of any deliberate plan for repelling the external force which was pressing upon their territories on all sides, and threatening the destruction which soon afterwards overwhelmed the giant Empire. Gratian was defeated and put to death in Gaul by Maximus, and Maximus, in turn, was overthrown and executed by Theodosius the Great, in 388. Barbarians and Romans now seemed to take breath for a moment, and it was thought by some that the profound tranquillity which prevailed might be relied on. It was, however, merely the ominous pause which precedes the thunder-storm—the silent crouching of the tiger preparatory to her fatal

spring. Theodosius was scarcely in the grave, and Honorius, his son, a boy of but ten years old, seated on the throne of the West, when the pent-up torrent of barbarism burst from the north, and swept away in its progress nearly all the landmarks of civilization.

In the year 396, Alaric, chief of the Visigoths, overran and plundered the eastern provinces of the Empire, and, six or seven years afterwards, commenced his march to the West. The Roman legions were then hastily withdrawn from Britain and Gaul for the defence of Italy; and, after various encounters, Honorius was compelled to purchase a truce, by relinquishing his Illyrian provinces to the invaders.

Gaul meanwhile became a prey to unnumbered hordes of Germans, driven from their own settlements by barbarians more fierce and less civilized than themselves. The cause of the vast commotion which thus impelled nation upon nation from the Tartar deserts is unknown; but the convulsion itself is ascertained to have extended to the extreme East, and has been supposed on specious grounds to have had an influence even on the population of America. But, be this as it may, the Goths, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Gepidæ, Saxons, Heruli, Allemanni, and numerous other races, poured over the Rhine, and desolated the land, scarcely anywhere encountering resistance from the feeble inhabitants. Nor were the horrors of civil war wanting to complete the disorganization of the country, and the miseries of the people. Constantine, a legionary of Britain, having been proclaimed Emperor by his countrymen, crossed the channel, and sought to establish his dominion on the ruins of that of Rome. He drew together the troops still remaining dispersed throughout Gaul, called to his aid the warlike Franks, who were becoming settled in the territories which had been assigned to them in Toxandria and elsewhere, gave battle to the Vandals, and defeating them near Cambray, assigned lands in Belgium, Novempopulana, and Aquitania, to the most tractable, and drove the rest into Spain. The arrangement effected between Honorius and Alaric now gave the former a moment's leisure to attempt the recovery of the Province. He despatched an able general, Constantius, against the usurper, who was captured at Arles and sent prisoner to Italy, but assassinated [411] before reaching the court of Honorius.

The power of the Empire, however, was too much shattered at the centre to be capable of being re-established at its extremities, and after finding that the struggle was hopeless, the Emperor himself sought to rid Italy of the presence of the Germans, by suggesting Gaul as an equally desirable and more easy conquest, and by bestowing on Ataulphus (Adolph), the brother-in-law of Alaric, the hand of his sister Placidia, and a settlement in Gascony, which included the ancient colony of Narbonne. This was the beginning of the kingdom of the Visigoths [419] in the South of France. The Burgundians (Vandals) had already [411] established themselves in the country of the Sequani, and defied every attempt to dislodge them. These two States, constantly enlarging their territory by conquest or unopposed seizure, soon

extended their respective boundaries—the Visigoths to the Pyrenees, the Rhone, and the Atlantic, and the Burgundians to the Rhone, the Mediterranean, and the Alps, whence they gradually pushed their frontiers towards the North, the most fertile portion of which had been taken possession of, during the general confusion, by the Franks. The Celtic Gauls from this period, if not earlier, began to amalgamate with the various races of their conquerors, and to adopt their habits and manners, under which they soon ceased to regard themselves, or to be regarded, as a separate people. The necessity for uniting with the Romans against the Gothic invaders of the land had first effectually reconciled them to the dominion of the Imperial governors. The withdrawal of the Roman legions, and the subsequent attacks of Scythian, Saxon, and Slavonian tribes, had induced them to look for protection from the Franks, Goths, and others, with whom they had become familiar. Still, however, there were many of the ancient Celts who refused to mingle theirs with the blood of their foreign oppressors; and these—too self-sacrificing to have been very numerous—in order to maintain the independence which they prized above all other possessions, betook themselves to the desolate hills and valleys, or sought refuge in remote forests, where they maintained a degree of savage freedom for ages, and where antiquaries even yet point out some faint traces of their continued existence.

The fusion of the Gauls and Goths, however, was not permitted to proceed without farther interruption. Before the effects of the last invasion had been obliterated, the son of Genseric, King or chief of the Burgundians, having quarrelled with Theodoric, King of the Visigoths, invited Attila, King of the Huns, to assist him in stripping that monarch of his dominions. Attila had but just been deterred from an attack upon Constantinople by the accession of the brave and skilful Marcian to the throne of the East. He was therefore prepared to welcome any new adventure that afforded a hope of pillage, from whomsoever it should proceed, and to march at once to the scene of action. He reached the banks of the Rhine early in the spring of 451, having set out from the Danube in the depth of winter, and procured subsistence on his march by plundering the territories of the German tribes. On the Gallic frontier he was met by a strong body of Franks, who, notwithstanding an immense disparity of numbers—the army of Attila amounted, it is said, to five hundred thousand Slavonians, Scythians, and Calmuck Tartars—ventured to give battle to the invaders, but without being successful in retarding their motions. The Franks were defeated with considerable slaughter, and the Huns, having cut down whole forests to make boats and rafts for their passage, crossed the Rhine and entered Gaul.

The progress of Attila was everywhere marked with the most fearful ravages. Despising the labours of Roman civilization, to which they attributed the degeneracy of the Imperial subjects, the Huns seemed to take pleasure in destruction for its own sake. The villages and open towns were given to the flames, and many walled towns and cities, full of rich monuments



of art and of architectural splendour, were not merely plundered and laid in ruins, but utterly annihilated, so that thenceforth their very names disappeared from history; while other wealthy and populous places—among which may be mentioned the ancient city of Trèves, long the capital of the united Prefecture of Gaul, Great Britain, and Spain—were unable to emerge from their wrecks, till seven or eight centuries after the visitation by which they were prostrated. Attila, in the course of his career, was told by a Gallic hermit that he was “the Scourge of God” for the sins of the Christians, and adopting the title as one suited to his character and disposition, he made it his glory and boast that the designation was not unmerited. In his fanatical zeal for destruction, he would in a few months have made a desert wilderness of the whole of Gaul. But the Emperor Valentinian III., moved by the distress of the natives, and hoping perhaps to attack such a formidable foe at advantage while removed from his resources, and thus to prevent his threatened descent upon Italy, sent Ætius, his general, to the assistance of Theodoric, who was straining every nerve to prepare for the unequal struggle which rapidly approached.

On the junction of the Goths and Romans, the combined armies marched at once in search of the spoiler, whom they came up with while engaged in the siege of Orléans, the northern gate of which his troops were forcing as Ætius and Theodoric entered by the road from the South. A battle ensued in the streets, but Attila, after sustaining great loss, was compelled to recross the Seine; and to retreat hastily towards the frontier—wreaking vengeance

upon all that he encountered by the way. The victors followed him as far as the plain of Catalaunique, between Troyes and Châlons, where the Huns had concentrated their immense forces and confidently awaited battle. The fate of the world was believed to depend on the issue of the conflict, which for the stern, unflinching valour with which it was maintained, might be considered—as far as mere warriors were concerned—worthy of the stake contended for. Theodoric, the aged King of the Visigoths, was killed at the head of his troops, but, his place being filled by Torrismond his son, his followers fought on undismayed to the end, when Attila was driven from the field and compelled to take refuge among the waggons which served at once as means of transport for his provisions and spoils, and as a barrier against the headlong pursuit of a triumphant enemy. On all sides the carnage was frightful. The Huns lost the flower of their splendid cavalry, and the Romans and Goths suffered so greatly that Ætius thought it prudent to allow the enemy an unopposed retreat, rather than bring him to bay again immediately.

Attila retired leisurely to the Rhine, and, passing that river, made his way back to Pannonia, where, after a fierce assault upon Upper Italy in the ensuing year, he met his death in 453—it is believed from the hand of a maiden, whom he had the same day added to his many other wives. The portrait of their king, as given by Jornandes, may suffice for a general picture of the savage Huns. Attila was of low stature, broad chested and of powerful frame; of dark complexion, with a straggling beard, a large head, flat nose, and small eyes. It was a saying of his that “no grass ever grew on a spot where his horse had trod;” and it is added that no one could behold him without concluding that he had been sent into the world on purpose to disturb it.

Among the chiefs who fought under Ætius at the decisive battle of Châlons, was a petty prince named Merovæus, who commanded the Salian Franks, one of the most warlike, though the least numerous of all the tribes of the Frankish confederation. The Salians had been long distinguished for their bravery, and especially for their gallant defence of Clodius when attacked in Toxandria a few years prior to the invasion of Attila by Ætius himself. Among their peculiarities were those of having established hereditary government—it is supposed under Pharamond—in the family of their leader, and the custom of their princes to wear long curls descending over their shoulders, while the rest of the Franks cut their hair close to the back of the head. Hence the Salian chiefs were called Long-haired princes, and it was a mark of the vilest disgrace to have their locks shorn either voluntarily or by force. We know little of the personal history of Merovæus, except that the inheritance which he bequeathed to his son was considerably larger than that he had derived from his father; his territory having been augmented by aggressions upon the Belgian and Lyonnese districts—the disorders occasioned by the larger encroachments of the Burgundians and Visigoths meanwhile having caused his own to be almost overlooked.

Under Childeric, the successor of Merovæus, the Empire of the West expired. In 476 Romulus Augustulus, with whose name the list of Roman Emperors terminates, ceded his throne and palace to Odoacer, the Herule, who thereupon assumed the title of King of Italy; and the mistress of the world sank at once to the condition of a second or third-rate power. The crimes and vices of Childeric induced his subjects—who had as little toleration for oppression under a native prince as under an enemy—to revolt, and Childeric was compelled to seek refuge with the King of Thuringia. After remaining in exile for several years he returned, bringing with him the



Thuringian monarch's wife, Basina, whom he had seduced, in gratitude for the protection afforded him as a fugitive by her husband. He never recovered his authority over the whole of the tribe, a great portion of which continued to support Ægidius, a Roman, or Romanized Frank, who had assumed the government and conducted it satisfactorily during Childeric's absence. At the death of Ægidius his son Syagrius succeeded him; and when the Merovingian prince also paid the debt of nature [A. D. 481] his son by Basina, named CLOVIS, was elevated on the shields of his followers as King of the Franks.

The Gothic and Burgundian kingdoms in the South and South-east had at this period attained their full limits. All the Provinces of the West, between the Seine and the Loire, formed an independent Republic, or rather a confederation of independent Republics, governed by elective military chiefs, under the general name of Armorica; and the North-east had become the prey of a number of obscure tribes, established among the ruins of the ancient Province, and ruling their separate districts, each after its own will. Nearly all that had been done hitherto for the advancement of civilization in Gaul required to be recommenced. The conquerors needed to be taught by the conquered, but were too haughty and too self-satisfied to become ready pupils; while the vanquished, degraded in their own eyes, gradually lost what they had acquired, abandoning with their character of free citizens the pride which had given them a desire for excellence, and the energy which had sufficed to achieve it. All onward movement was for the time retarded, and it had become necessary to restore and repair—labours which seldom have great charms for the ambitious, as they comprise neither the allurements of novelty, nor those indefinite and vague hopes of honour and renown which spur to original enterprise. In evolving rational order from universal confusion, the mind, clogged by traditions of departed greatness and glory, is rather palled than incited by the comparison, and an aching sense of abasement and degeneracy takes the place of emulation and ardour. This was especially the case with the Provinces of the Western Empire, which under the Roman dominion had received the highest degree of refinement; and their retrogression, though probably rather supposed than real, had incalculable influence in retarding the re-assertion of independent intellectual supremacy.





CHAPTER II.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CLOVIS TO THE ASSUMPTION OF REGAL POWER
BY PEPIN THE ELDER. A. D. 481 TO 687.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE SALIAN FRANKS—CONVERSION, CONQUESTS AND DEATH OF CLOVIS—WARS OF SUCCESSION—INVASIONS OF THE GOTHES, SAXONS, DANES AND LOMBARDS—BOIS FAINÉANTS—THE GOVERNMENT VESTED IN PEPIN D'HERISTAL—PROGRESS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.



LIKE those of all the German tribes which obtained settlements in Gaul—the collective territory of which may henceforth be called France—the political institutions of the Salian Franks differed essentially from those which had been established by the Romans, and from those also which had prevailed among the ancient Celts. Before proceeding with the History of the reigns of Clovis and his successors, it is necessary to give a brief outline of the Constitution of Government and Society among that people, in order, as much as possible, to avoid constantly recurring explanations in the narrative of events.

The government of the Romans, both in the Capital and the Western Provinces of the Empire, was a concentration of municipal institutions, a confederation of towns and cities, connected with each other by a mere network of public functionaries, closely linked among themselves and to the Imperial court, and solely employed in giving effect to the decrees of power,

and in making available to that power the resources of society. There was no common bond of union between the citizens of one municipality and another. Every one was devotedly attached to the corporation of which he was a member, but he cared little for the fate of any beyond that narrow pale. The freedom of which the Roman orators, historians and poets so frequently spoke, was municipal, not personal freedom, and this was displayed in full force during the decline of the Empire. Although in the time of the Emperor Honorius the inhabitants of Gaul were offered a representative government, analogous to the system since adopted in the country, for the purpose of creating a National feeling, in place of that which limited men's attachment to one small locality, the boon was rejected, and it was found impossible to form a general society, or to create a sentiment of general fraternity. This is believed to have been one great cause of the fall of the Empire. The citizens of every town shut themselves up within their own walls, and refused to concern themselves with anything but what they deemed their individual welfare; and all became an easy prey from being isolated and unsupported.

Among the Celts the patriarchal system was maintained till superseded by the municipia of the Romans. The clans were associations of people of the same name or kindred, dwelling, not in towns but in villages or hamlets, and generally living in common, in a state not far removed from equality. Upon this race personal freedom, the predominance of the clan or tribe, and the influence of religion, operated as incitements to action; but the minute subdivision of the people as a nation, their want of organization, the diversity of interest among them, and their perpetual feuds with each other, rendered them incapable of that continued combination and unity of exertion, which alone could have rendered them able to resist successfully the compact and well disciplined military power arrayed against them, and by which they were subdued. The Roman system was originally forced upon the Celts; but during the four centuries and a half of Imperial domination which succeeded, almost every trace of the patriarchal government was obliterated. Cities and towns without number sprang up, in place of the ancient congregations of huts; and necessities were gradually created which were totally incompatible with the old modes of life. The people everywhere became Romanized—their minds as well as their habits having undergone a total change; and the traditions and local attachments of the clans were lost by dispersion of their members, and the general adoption of new names and distinctions.

The Franks, and indeed the whole of the Germans, before their establishment in France, had emerged from the patriarchal condition, without having parted with their ideas of personal freedom and social equality. The tribes were rather military associations than distinct families or clans. The tie that held them together was that between warriors and their chief, and all the other distinctions of grade among them were those of military subordination. "The groundwork of this relation," says M. Guizot, "was the attachment of man to man, the fidelity of one individual to another without external

compulsion, or any obligation founded on the general principles of society. In the ancient Republics no man was specially attached to another; but all were bound to their city. With the barbarians, the social bond was formed among individuals; in the first place by the relation of the chief to his comrades, when they lived in a banded state traversing Europe, and later by the relation of lord and vassal."

The freedom of this military companionship, however, was purely selfish. The warrior thought only of his own interest; and so long as he was permitted to indulge his passions and inclinations, without controul or molestation, he had no desire to comprehend any higher species of liberty. The conquered natives were remorselessly stripped of their privileges as well as their property, and reduced to the most abject bondage. Every chief and free soldier of a victorious army had not only lands assigned him in the conquered territory, but a number of captives, to enable the proprietor to cultivate his estates, and to perform such other services as he might require, or as might be required from him for the benefit of the community. The tenure of the lands thus obtained was conformable to the existing order of things. Conditions were imposed upon the holder of every grant that in all wars affecting the welfare of the State, the land-owner should take the field himself, and bring thither and support a number of armed men, proportioned to the extent of his fief or seigniory.

The king or prince was subject to the same general regulations as his soldiers. As leader of the army he had the largest share of the conquered domains, and the controul and disposition of all the lands reserved for the reward of future services; and he was entitled besides to contributions in money, provisions, raiment and arms, from the different feudatories acknowledging his sovereignty. But from him, as from all others, the performance of certain duties was exacted in return for the homage accorded him. He was the supreme judge in all criminal and civil matters affecting his followers or peers—his authority being conferred expressly for the execution of justice. According to the laws of the Visigoths, collected at the commencement of the sixth century, "The king (*rex*) is so called because he governs justly (*recte*). If he acts with justice he possesses legitimately the name of king; but, if he acts unjustly, he perishes miserably. Therefore our fathers rightly said, 'Thou wilt be king if thou perform just actions; but, if not, king thou wilt not be.'" The king was required to provide and pay the necessary officers for the administration of public affairs, to lead his peers to battle, to protect them from aggression and insult, and to arrange all differences springing up among them. It was his duty to entertain the ambassadors of other States, to maintain at all times a liberal hospitality in his court and camp, and, by his example, to incite his adherents to acts of daring enterprise and valorous achievement. He had no power over the persons or possessions of freemen, each of whom was as independent, in his degree, as the king himself; and could only be subjected to penalty on the judgment of his equals. The

government, in fact, was that of a military Republic, of which the prince was merely the president or chief magistrate. The kingly claim to govern by Divine right had not at that period been mooted; nor would the Franks have submitted for a moment to the arbitrary will of an individual, elected originally by and from among themselves, responsible to them for his acts, and transmitting his rank and power to his posterity merely on sufferance.

Both the legislative and executive authority belonged to the military peers. The former was exercised in a general council, at which each freeman appears to have been entitled to speak and vote; and the latter was carried out in the courts of justice, which, for convenience, were divided into three kinds—the county-court, the president of which was called a Count; the hundred-court, directed by a Centenary; and the tithing-court, regulated by a Decanus. In the general council the king had his throne, but he could merely regulate, as minister of the State, the proceedings of the assembly; and it was the same with his officers in the local courts. The warriors present were the legislators and jurors respectively, and the presidents had but to cause the decrees promulgated under their several jurisdictions to be put in execution.

As regards the nature of the laws in force at this period, it is extremely doubtful whether the Franks had any written system, code, or maxims of jurisprudence. It is generally believed, indeed, that they were governed by mere customs and traditions brought with them from Germany, and having reference chiefly to the unsettled life they had been accustomed to lead among their native wilds. This, however, is certain, that, in operation, the laws or customs were merely prohibitive, penal and retributive; and that almost every kind of offence might be compounded for with money. “The right concealed under this custom of composition,” it has been said, “is that of every man to do himself justice, and to avenge himself by force. It is the war between the offender and the offended. . . the latter preserving, in the most barbarous times, the right of election between composition and war,—of rejecting the *wehrgeld*, and having recourse to vengeance.” Men’s lives were valued at a fixed rate, according to their rank and station. The Frank, his wife, his free-tenant, and his serf, were not estimated at the same sum, but their personal security was made matter of tariff. Though the *wehrgeld* of the king was highest of any, the life of the serf was likewise protected—from all but his master—by the pecuniary value set upon it. A leg, an arm, an eye, a finger, had each its separate worth, according to the *wehr* of its owner. From his lord the unhappy serf had no protection. He was a chattel upon the freeman’s domain, and was constantly bought and sold as such, in the same way as a horse, or an ox,—his value being somewhat more than that of the latter and less than the former. He had no power to change his situation or condition, to move from one place of residence to another, or to marry, except with permission of his owner:—and if he did marry, the abominable law of *mercheta* taught him how abject was his slavery, and how barbarous the power and appetite of his conqueror.

The modes of judicial procedure among the Franks were trial by ordeal, by battle and by the testimony of compurgators. The ordeal was of various kinds, but most commonly it appears to have been thus :—The accused took an oath as to his innocence before the court, and supported it by plunging his arm into a boiling cauldron, or by bearing in his hand a red-hot iron for a given time or distance, when, if no marks of injury were apparent, he was liberated. Wager of battle was a challenge given to the accuser to make good his charge, either by his own valour or the skill in arms of a champion—a mode of decision which was in high favour among all warlike nations, for a long period after the introduction of better defined forms of process. And the oaths of compurgators, whose number was regulated by the nature of the offence, were admitted, in support of that of the accused, as to his previous character, and their belief in his innocence. Evidence, direct or circumstantial, went for nothing in opposition to the chance decisions referred to—a fact which affords a fair criterion of the value set upon men's discretion, and the estimation in which they held each other's veracity. The form of proceeding by compurgators, however, is believed to have originated the modern jury. These persons, limited in time to a convenient number, came to be judges in the causes before them, listening to the proofs adduced, and deciding by their verdict the guilt or innocence of the accused. The punishments awarded to convicted criminals ranged from the severest down to the most lenient, embracing death, immediate or by protracted torture, mutilation, whipping, branding, outlawry, banishment, slavery, imprisonment and fines. Resentment, however, is said to have been in all cases the sole motive for prosecuting crimes; and the gratification of that passion was the end and the rule in punishing them. "He that suffered the wrong was the only person who had a right to pursue the aggressor; to demand or remit the punishment;—and he might accept of a compensation for any offence how heinous soever. The prosecution of criminals, in the name and by the authority of the community, in order to deter others from violating the law, now justly deemed the great object of legislation, was a maxim of jurisprudence totally unknown or disregarded."

Such, as far as any tolerable certainty can be attained on the subject, were the political institutions of the Franks at the accession of Clovis in 481. The people had not subsided into a settled and peaceful state, and the government was consequently one of force rather than law. Every man obeyed the dictates of his own will, at least up to that point at which he felt he must encounter opposition from the will of another as powerful as himself. Nor was this always a sufficient check to his arrogance; and wars ensued between one soldier and another, who, supported by their several vassals and retainers, took the settlement of differences into their own hands, in a manner more consonant to their habits than an appeal to the decision of less interested parties. According to Tacitus, whose account of the manners of the earlier German tribes was amply confirmed by the conduct of their descendants for several

generations, they were easily provoked, knew not how to forgive an injury, and took the most savage vengeance for an insult. A dispute at a hunting or drinking party was sufficient to create a deadly and implacable feud, and the quarrel of a chieftain was adopted by his friends and dependants. To chastise the insolent, to plunder the defenceless, and to enlarge a narrow domain were legitimate causes of war; and, in the result, it was universally believed that right declared itself by conquest. It must be borne in mind at the same time that the Franks had not then received the lights of Christianity; but remained worshippers of the elements, and believers in the divinity of their reputed ancestors, Thor and Odin.

It has already been said that the kingdom of the Franks was divided, at the death of Childeric, between Clovis and Syagrius. The capital of the latter was Soissons, while that of the former is believed to have been Tournay. Syagrius appears to have collected around his standard a number of the Romanized Gauls, and assuming to govern in right of the Empire, termed himself King of the Romans. The first exploit of Clovis was to declare war against this prince for the recovery of what he considered his patrimony; a step which he appears to have taken under the advice of his relative Ragnacaire, who, on account of his youth, was associated with him in the government. Syagrius hesitated not to take the field against his adversary; but in the first engagement his troops gave way, and were driven with precipitation towards the territory of Alaric, King of the Visigoths, who reigned at Toulouse. Here the monarch of Soissons expected to find not merely refuge but an ally. Clovis, however, before Syagrius could concert measures with Alaric, sent a messenger to the latter to inform him that if he gave shelter to the enemy of the Franks the war would be brought into his own dominions; and the King of Toulouse, fearing to embroil himself—"the Goths," according to Gregory of Tours, "being ever a timid people,"—returned for answer that Syagrius was under sure guard at his court. A short time afterwards [A. D. 486] the defeated king was "quietly made away with" by his host.

The death of Syagrius secured to Clovis the possession of the Provinces which still remained attached to the Roman name and government, and his prudence and policy were at once displayed by endeavouring to restrain his barbarous followers from pillage and the licence of conquest. Although unable to save from spoliation and destruction the open towns and villages, he succeeded in preventing the demolition of cities and large towns, by abstaining from entering them after receiving their formal submission. At Rheims there is still a street called the *Rue du Barbastre*, which was formerly a road passing under the outer wall of the city, and which received its name—*Le chemin Barbare*—because Clovis caused his troops to defile along it when he appeared before Rheims. The precaution adopted frequently, but not always, succeeded. Rheims though spared from ruin was subjected to plunder.

A memorable story is related by the chroniclers as to the booty taken on this occasion. Among the rest was a vase of great value, which had been

long used for sacred purposes in the Christian church of Rheims. St. Remi (Remigius) who was bishop at the time, sent one of his clerks to Soissons to entreat the restoration by the king of the consecrated vessel, and Clovis desirous of propitiating his new subjects, listened favourably to the prayer. When the spoil therefore came to be divided, the king demanded that the vase in question should be added to his portion. The proposal displeased one of the Frank warriors present, who dealing on the vase a heavy blow with his francisca—a name by which the battle-axes used by these ruthless soldiers



was distinguished—exclaimed, “Thou shalt have nothing but what falls to thy lot.” The vase, nevertheless, was restored to the church whence it had been taken: but such were the Frankish notions of equality that the rudeness of the soldier not only passed unpunished by the king, but unnoticed by his companions. Clovis, however, though he suppressed his resentment for the time, did not forego the first opportunity of vengeance. About a year after-

wards, on reviewing his troops, he went to the man who had struck the vase, and examining his arms complained that they were in bad condition, and threw them on the ground. The soldier stooped to recover them, and at that moment the king struck him on the head with his battle-axe, crying "Thus didst thou to the vase of Soissons!" This, as an evidence of the condition of the Franks, and of the ties by which they were united, gives but the idea of a band of robbers and their chief. The boldest and bravest was always justified in his violence, according to the amount of daring which he exhibited at the moment.

While the Franks were establishing themselves in their new dominions, and seeking to extend their territories, their original settlement was subjected to a terrible invasion on the part of Basin, the ancient host of King Childeric, and husband of the mother of Clovis. He brought with him across the Rhine the choicest of his Thuringian troops, and all the warriors he could allure to his standard by hopes of prey, promises of an easy victory, and of large rewards. The helpless inhabitants of the invaded districts—their protectors being at a distance—were speedily subdued and compelled to deliver to the fierce old king a large number of hostages, on whom were avenged with fearful and unheard-of tortures the ingratitude of Childeric. Many had their legs and thighs slit and were suspended from the branches of trees by the nerves separated from the flesh; others were fastened to stakes and thrown upon the high roads, where, after having heavily laden carriages driven over their bodies, they were abandoned to the wolves and birds of prey. More



than two hundred young women were stripped and fastened by the arms to the necks of wild horses, which, being turned loose in the plains, lacerated

and tore to pieces their hapless burdens amid the briars and stones over which they passed. Clovis no sooner heard of these outrages than he hastened from Soissons to punish the aggressor, and, according to his biographer, Gregory of Tours, he not only expelled the Thuringians from his country, but followed them into their own, and defeating them there reduced them to entire subjection. It is most probable, however, as there were Kings of Thuringia long after this, that he contented himself with humiliating Basin and imposing upon him an annual tribute, agreeably to the general custom of the period.

The ambition of Clovis and the restlessness of his followers permitted brief pause in the career of conquest which the Franks had commenced. The south of France, from its fertility, mild climate, and commercial wealth, offered the richest prize. The pusillanimity exhibited by Alaric in the protection of Syagrius induced a belief that the Visigoths would make little resistance to an army which had spread the terror of its name, and the renown of its leader, from the Pyrenees to the German Ocean; and the Burgundians, though more warlike than their neighbours, had begun to feel the influence of the brighter skies and more comfortable dwellings of the banks of the Rhone and Saône, and preferred repose to incessant turmoil and war.

In the court of Gondebaud, the king of Burgundy, Clovis had already created an interest by means of frequent embassies; and, in order to obtain a pretext for more general interference in the affairs of that nation, he solicited the hand of Clotilda, Gondebaud's niece, in marriage. This princess is represented as both wise and beautiful. Towards her uncle she entertained the most deadly hatred; for he had slain her father, caused her mother to be cast, with a stone fastened round her neck, into the Rhone, and had compelled her sister to take the veil in one of the gloomy convents of that early period. To the proposals of the envoys of Clovis, therefore, she listened with the satisfaction of one who, in bonds, obtain tidings of approaching freedom; and Gondebaud, knowing the power and the disposition of the King of the Franks, dared not brave his anger by rejecting his suit. Clotilda was consequently affianced to Clovis [A. D. 493], and had already commenced her journey to the court of her husband, under the escort of Aurelian—a Gaul who had taken office under Clovis and had negotiated the marriage—when Aredius, the enemy of the fair Burgundian's family, sought to deprive her of the honour and happiness that awaited her. He sent after her a troop of horsemen empowered to bring her back, and so closely were these emissaries on her track, that they captured the litter in which she had been conveyed, with part of the money forming her marriage portion. But Clotilda herself, with a courage and determination not unworthy of the chief she had espoused, mounted on horseback, and fled, with part of her escort, towards the territory of the Franks, ordering her attendants to set fire to everything that pertained to her uncle and his subjects, which they might meet with on their way.

Clovis must have been delighted with such a heroine for his bride; and it

is certain that she exercised considerable influence over him by her counsels—especially in inducing him to embrace the Christian faith. He and the Franks in general had hitherto retained the creed of their German forefathers, blended in some measure with the Druidical worship, which flattered their notions of freedom, and which had taken so firm a hold on the popular mind throughout France, that, long after the whole of the inhabitants had become Christian in name, and even down to the tenth century, it was found necessary, in the ecclesiastical councils, expressly to forbid not merely laymen but priests from performing the rites by which the old Celtic religion had been distinguished. From the smouldering ashes of Druidism, indeed, it is now generally admitted that the modern mythology of fairy-land and witchcraft had its origin; and Christianity itself was constrained to preserve by adoption many of the ancient festivals, in order, by giving them new names, to obliterate as far as possible the cause and purposes of their original institution. Clotilda, though educated among Arians, was a fervent Catholic, and strove hard to win her lord from his pagan belief and practices; and her exertions were ably seconded by the Christian bishops and clergy established in the Frankish kingdom. Saint Remi himself, who by his prudent counsel and adroit flattery had ingratiated himself in the monarch's favour, expended considerable eloquence in endeavouring to make him a proselyte—the rather that the Gallic kings who had already embraced Christianity were Arians, and stern persecutors of the orthodox church, within the pale of which it was hoped Clovis might in time be brought. For two or three years, however, the warrior chief resisted all entreaties to renounce the religion of his ancestors; thinking it shame, perhaps, to be swayed in so grave a matter by the mere rhetoric of a woman and a peaceful monk. Meanwhile, his knowledge of Christianity, it may be safely affirmed, was not without effect upon his mind and conduct; and eventually an opportunity occurred for his adoption of the new faith, without incurring a suspicion that his apostacy originated otherwise than in a spontaneous conviction of his former errors.

Between the years 493 and 496 it appears that Clovis commenced his quarrel with the King of Burgundy, for which the pursuit of Clotilda by Aredius would have furnished an ample excuse, had there been no predisposition on the part of the king to seek a cause of hostility with his neighbour. The particulars of the war, however—if war indeed there was—have not been recorded, and the fact itself is gathered only from the expression of a subsequent letter of congratulation, in which Gondebaud is called the “soldier of the Franks.”

The next transaction of this reign is less obscure, and of infinitely more importance. The Allemanni, whose name has often appeared among the barbarian invaders of Gaul under the Romans, had obtained no settlement in the country overrun by their kinsmen; and they soon began to feel that they were losers by the overthrow of the Empire, in being deprived of their prescriptive right of periodical pillage. They resolved therefore to renew their

incursions, and either fix a tribute upon the occupiers of the land, or obtain part of the conquered country for themselves. About the year 496 they presented themselves in the territory of the Ripuairian Franks, who were settled around Cologne, and who bravely contested the passage of the Rhine. They however, must have been overpowered by numbers had not Clovis hastened with his Salian followers to their assistance. The belligerent forces encountered in the plains of Tolbiac, four or five leagues west of the river; and, after a brief struggle, Sigebert, King of the Ripuairians, having been wounded in the knee, and disabled from heading his troops, his soldiers began to give way, and disorder was rapidly extending through the army. Clovis endeavoured to rally the fugitives, and, driven to despair by the prospect of

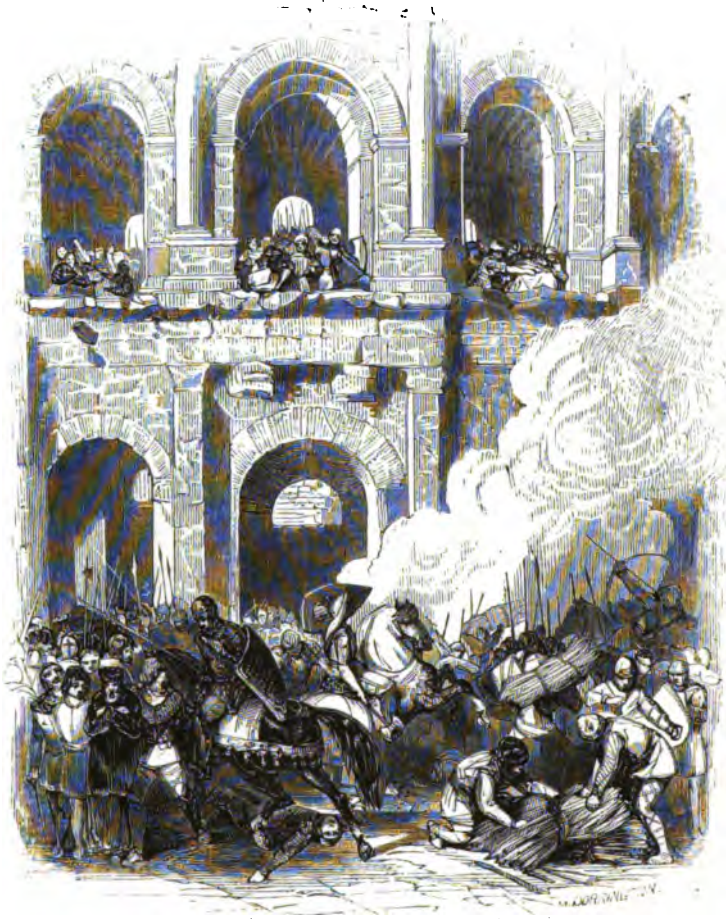


defeat, made a solemn vow that if victory should be vouchsafed to him, he would embrace the Christian faith and be baptised. This kind of conditional conversion was by no means unfrequent in the early times of the church, when the preachers of the gospel found it necessary to assume miraculous powers for themselves, and to inculcate a belief in the direct interposition of the Deity in temporal affairs, in order to gain the confidence of disciples who would less readily have comprehended the advantages of eternal happiness in a life beyond the grave. According to the monkish writers, "the invocation of Clovis was heard." The wavering Franks were reanimated by the exhortations of their leader; the battle was restored; the King of the Allemanni fell mortally wounded on the field, and his followers were totally routed. The

conqueror chased the flying Germans to the foot of the Rhætian Alps, where, on their entire submission, farther pursuit was stayed.

Passing through Toul on his return, Clovis was met by Saint Vaast, who, coming to congratulate him on his triumph, learned to his joyful surprise that he was in future to regard the victor as a Christian. The news of the auspicious event was speedily diffused far and wide, and Queen Clotilda and Saint Remi hastened to complete the good work they had commenced. A day was appointed for the baptism of the monarch, and, in the meantime, the priests were not inactive among the Franks, who, swayed by the example of their chief, now lent a willing ear to doctrines, the pacific tendency of which had doubtless retarded their previous acceptance. An army of three thousand warriors, all arrayed in white vestments, received together the initiatory sacrament, and public rejoicings were celebrated by the clergy and laity throughout the land. It was a triumph, indeed, for the whole Catholic world, which had thus gained the support of the most redoubtable champion of the age. Pope Anastasius II. wrote to felicitate his "glorious and illustrious son" on his reformation, calling him his "joy and his crown," and hailing him as "a pillar of iron to the orthodox church." Avitus, bishop of Vienna, condescended to use still grosser flattery to the new convert. He invited him to shield with his protection the Catholics of every country, reminded him that his (Avitus') master, Gondebaud, had already rendered him homage, and added, "Wherever you combat, the victory will be ours." The only evidence of the personal zeal of Clovis on the occasion is an anecdote relating to the preaching of Saint Remi. The good bishop having expatiated upon the passion and death of the Saviour, produced such an effect upon the king that he started from his seat, and seizing his spear exclaimed, "Had I been present with my brave Franks, I would have avenged his wrongs."

There is little doubt, however, that the conversion of Clovis was fully as much a matter of policy as of faith. He had long been desirous of a plea for extending his sway over the whole people of ancient Gaul, and he readily foresaw that this would be afforded by his adoption of the religion which had become all but universal throughout the country; but which was directed by fierce sectarians, whose jealousies and antipathies could not fail to furnish constant pretexts for his interference in their disputes. These considerations also are supposed to have actuated him in his choice of a party in the church. The remnants of the Gallo-Roman population, including the powerful confederation of the Armorican Provinces, were Catholics, while the Visigoths and Burgundians were Arians. Clovis on embracing the tenets of the orthodox faction, being the only sovereign of that persuasion west of the Alps and the Rhine, was naturally looked upon by all who held the same opinions in France as their proper patron and protector. The Armoricans were the first on whom this influence operated in political transactions. On learning that the Franks had adopted their creed they no longer hesitated to enter into negotiations, and to form friendly alliances with them; and such



Sack of Avignon.

were henceforth the conciliatory manners of the two races towards each other that, in an almost incredibly short space, intermarriages took place among them to such an extent that Franks and Armoricans came to regard themselves in the light of one great family, and to look upon Clovis as their common sovereign. This good understanding, which nothing occurred to interrupt, led gradually to the voluntary surrender of all the fortresses and walled towns hitherto retained by those who had considered the Franks as foreign intruders, the native inhabitants merely stipulating with their allies that their laws, customs and national costume should be respected, and that, when their services might be required in war, they should be arrayed under their ancient standards. Thus, by degrees, the entire country north of the Loire was united under the sceptre of the Frankish king, who was thereupon enabled to turn his attention with greater confidence towards the south, where his intrigues and the intelligence of his conversion had already produced their expected fruits.

The Catholics of Burgundy had suffered much persecution from the Arian king, and the rancour of each sect had grown so strong as to disturb the government, and divide the country against itself. Each party denounced the opinions of the other as heretical, and the punishments awarded for difference of faith among Christians were precisely similar to those which, at an earlier period, the pagans inflicted upon the revilers of the Gods of Greece and Rome. The schism created dissension in the bosom of the Sovereign's own family, and Godegisile, the brother of Gondebaud, taking part with the Catholics, at last had recourse to the friendship of Clovis to assist him in expelling the heretic monarch and gaining possession of his throne—promising, on that condition, to do homage to the King of the Franks, and to pay him tribute. The person appealed to needed little incitement to pursue a course so agreeable to his wishes, and so consonant to his interests. He accordingly at once assembled an army, and advanced into the Burgundian territories, where, on the banks of the Ousche, a small river which flows into the Saône, he was met by the troops of Gondebaud. The treason of Godegisile had not yet transpired, and, notwithstanding the differences between him and his brother, he still held a command in the Burgundian army. At the first encounter of the hostile forces, however, he deserted his post on the field, and went over to the adversary; a step which produced such confusion in the ranks of his countrymen that they were utterly defeated, and Gondebaud, put to flight, was compelled to throw himself for safety into Avignon; whence on the approach of the invader he sent messengers to him expressing his readiness to share his throne with his brother and to recognise the supremacy of Clovis. The conditions were accepted, and Godegisile was established with regal powers at Vienna, where his ally left him under the protection, and, in all probability, the controul, of a body of five thousand Franks.

But no sooner had Clovis returned to his own country, than Gondebaud, whose submission had been a mere *ruse* to gain time, and whose resentment

at the baseness of his brother's treachery was implacable, made ready at Lyons a secret expedition, and hastening thence suddenly invested Godegisile in his capital. Everything was instantly thrown into disorder at Vienna; and the king, wishing to reserve the scanty stock of provisions in the city for his Frank guards, was compelled to drive the unarmed citizens beyond the walls, in order that the place might be preserved from famine till intelligence should be conveyed to Clovis, and succour might be brought to the beleaguered garrison. This measure, however necessary under the circumstances, occasioned the ruin of Godegisile. Among the expelled inhabitants was one who had the care of the aqueducts, and he, in revenge for having been repulsed from his home, offered to introduce the troops of Gondebaud into the



town through the water conduits. The Franks were thus taken by surprise, and the city was devoted to pillage and massacre. Amid the indiscriminate slaughter which ensued, Godegisile, who had sought refuge in a church, was killed at the foot of the altar; mingling his blood, as he expired, with that of an Arian bishop, who had rushed to the same place of fancied security.

Clovis was not long ere he arrived to avenge the death of his ally. Breathing furious denunciations against the peace-breakers he carried war and desolation into the territory of Gondebaud, whom he defeated in every encounter, and would have entirely stripped of his dominions, but for the intercession of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, who had just defeated Odoacer and established himself as sovereign of Italy. At his mediation the Burgundian was permitted to retain part of his realm, and to become tributary to the Franks; and Clovis had leisure to foment new disturbances in the kingdom of the Visigoths.

This people had arrived at a much higher civilization than any of the other

barbarian nations by which France had been overrun. Their settlement was among the oldest and most prosperous of the colonies founded by the Romans, and the conquerors, instead of imposing new laws and customs on the natives, had adopted those which they found already in operation. "There is not," says M. Guizot, "a single barbaric enactment in their laws... Instead of estimating men according to their rank, like their kinsmen, they had established the principle that, in the eyes of the law, all men were of equal value; and the oaths of compurgators had been displaced for the testimony of actual witnesses, and for such a rational investigation of facts as belongs to civilized society... Crimes were reduced to their moral and true element, intention. Different shades of criminality—the purely involuntary homicide, accidental homicide, justifiable homicide, and homicide with or without premeditation—were distinguished and defined, and their punishments varied on an equitable scale." But the mildness and order thus introduced had impaired the warlike character of the Goths, and by inspiring them with stronger domestic attachments, had rendered them more peaceful, and made the prospect of their subjugation to such a prince as Clovis a matter of almost calculable certainty. He had long looked upon their beautiful country with eyes of desire, and since his conversion to Christianity had maintained a correspondence with the Catholic portion of the population, to whom, there can be little doubt, he afforded all necessary encouragement in their decided opposition to the acts of the predominant Arians. It was his interest to keep alive the religious rancour of the sectarians throughout France; and his Christianity was never of such a kind as to induce him to forego an advantage from any consideration of justice or humanity.

Alaric seems to have foreseen the probable consequences of the policy of Clovis, and to have endeavoured to avert them by conciliation, and by forming a friendly alliance with the Franks. After the reduction of Burgundy he sent messengers to the conqueror desiring a personal interview with him;—for what particular object has not been recorded. Clovis however assented to the request, and the two kings met in a small island in the river Loire, near Amboise, where according to Gregory of Tours, who was subsequently bishop of the diocese in which the meeting took place, "they conferred, and ate, and drank together, and each pledged himself to maintain amicable relations with the other; after which, they returned in peace to their several places."

This, however, was but a hollow truce. Clovis did not relax his efforts to obtain an influence among the Visigoths, and when Alaric sought by energetic measures to suppress the growing dissensions among his subjects on account of religious differences, he was met by the Catholic clergy with a stern defiance. They did not indeed attempt to conceal their preference for the government of the Franks, or their reliance on the support of Clovis. Persecution was eventually resorted to; but this only made the matter worse, by affording a pretext for hostilities. Quintien, bishop of Rodez, was expelled from his see, on the express ground that he was desirous of placing the



country under the dominion of the Catholic king. Volusian, bishop of Tours, was exiled to Toulouse for treasonable or seditious correspondence with Clovis, and Verus, his successor, had experienced the same punishment for a similar offence. The population, both Arians and Catholics, were active adherents of their respective prelates; and the whole country, involved in the animosities of the two factions, appeared on the brink of civil war. While the State party sought by confiscation and banishment to crush the power of their adversaries, the latter appealed for support and protection to the King of the Franks.

The opportunity was too tempting to be neglected by Clovis. Accordingly, in the year 507, he declared his intention of interfering on behalf of the orthodox. "He spoke one day," says Gregory of Tours, "after this manner to his friends, 'It is with much disquietude that I have endured so long the occupation, by Arian heretics, of a part of Gaul. Let us now go against them; and when, by God's aid, we shall have vanquished them, we will reduce the country they possess to our allegiance.'" His preparations for this pretended holy war had already been made, and he was speedily enabled to put his army in motion towards the Visigoth frontier.



A.rian killed by Clovis.

In his march towards Poitiers, where he contemplated joining battle with Alaric, he is said to have exhibited the greatest respect for the property and privileges of the Church. Having passed the Loire at Tours, he traversed the lands of the abbey of St. Martin, which he declared inviolate, and refused permission to his soldiers to touch anything save water and grass for their horses. So rigid were his orders, and the obedience he exacted in this respect, that a Frankish soldier having taken, without the consent of the owner, some hay, which belonged to a poor man, saying in raillery "that it was but grass," he caused the aggressor to be put to death, exclaiming that "Victory could not be expected, if St. Martin should be offended." It is probable that this reverence for canonized personages was not wholly affected. Proselytes are usually more superstitious than those who retain the faith which they received in childhood; and the worship of relics, the doctrine of the Intercession of Saints, and the sanctity of clerical possessions, had already been engrafted as essential things on the purer tenets of Catholicism. But whether his conduct ought to be attributed to conscientious scruples or otherwise, there is no doubt of its worldly policy; since it could not fail to strengthen the attachment towards him of the whole body of the Catholics, and even in some measure to disarm his Arian opponents, who must have entertained a favourable opinion of his piety, while they denounced the heresy of his creed.

On reaching the Vienne, a river which separates the provinces of Touraine and Poitou, an unexpected obstacle presented itself. The stream had overflowed its banks, and carried away all means of passage. This would have compromised the fate of the expedition; but while the Franks lay encamped in the neighbourhood, a stag crossed the stream in sight of the whole army, and thus pointed out the existence of an available ford. The incident, which was regarded as an omen of success by the beholders, was immediately turned to advantage, and a few days afterwards Clovis presented himself before Poitiers, under the walls of which he found the chivalry of Alaric already drawn up to oppose his progress.

The conflict between the hostile forces took place on the plain of Vouillé. The battle was long and bloody. On each side the warriors were animated by the remorseless zeal and rancorous hate of fanaticism; and while the adherents of Clovis—in whose ranks there is reason to believe many Visigoths bore arms against their countrymen—strove no less for the supremacy of their faith than the laurels and more substantial rewards of conquest, the followers of Alaric contended for freedom of opinion, and national independence. In the heat of the battle the two kings met in personal encounter, and Clovis, having unhorsed his adversary, put him to death with a thrust of his spear. The victor, however, narrowly escaped the same fate as his victim. The moment after he had slain Alaric, two Visigoth horsemen came up, and spurring towards him with fixed lances, must have overwhelmed him, but for the strength and speed of his horse, which bore him from the spot into the midst of his own followers. In the end, the Goths were totally defeated, and

their realm thenceforth ceased to form a monarchy of France. Of the many primitive Gauls, who being Arians, had taken the field with Alaric, the Auvergnats (people of Auvergne) alone distinguished themselves in the contest; and they were slaughtered almost to a man.

The Frankish army was now divided into two bodies, of which the first, conducted by the king in person, overran the Provinces of Touraine, Poitou, Limousin, Perigord, Saintonge, and Angoumois, all the cities and towns of which—with the single exception of Angoulême, which contained a large and well-appointed garrison of Visigoths, whom it was not deemed prudent to attack—opened their gates on the approach of the enemy, without an attempt at resistance. The campaign of Clovis terminated with the capture of Bordeaux, where, as the season was far advanced, the troops took up their quarters for the winter. The second corps of the invading force, under Thierry, the eldest son of Clovis, by a concubine, or, more correctly, a wife whom he had espoused previously to his conversion, had been charged with the reduction of the country bordering on the Rhone and the Pyrenees—a task which would have been accomplished with little difficulty, but for the interference of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth; who, remembering the affinity of his people with the Visigoths, and being himself an Arian, sent Count Ibbas, his general, against the Franks, to arrest their career of conquest, and protect the natives of the South from their ravages. Thierry, in consequence of this movement, was compelled to raise the siege of Carcassone, in which his new opponent found him engaged, and to retire, like his father, into winter cantonments.

Notwithstanding this check, however, the entire conquest of the Visigoth kingdom was effected by the Franks in the following spring, and the dauntless soldiers of Clovis without delay prepared to carry the war into Provence, which Theodoric had obtained as a gift during the wars of the Franks with Gondebaud, King of Burgundy. But his usual good fortune, and the protection of St. Martin of Tours, alike deserted the Frankish monarch in this too daring enterprise. In a battle which took place between his army and that of Ibbas beneath the walls of Arles, the Franks were defeated, with the loss, according to the computation of Cassiodorus, of thirty thousand of their bravest warriors. This reverse snatched from the sceptre of Clovis not only Provence itself, but all the territory lying along the coast of the Mediterranean, and that skirting the Alps, which Theodoric left as formerly to the government of the Visigoths, on receiving their recognition of his suzerainty, and their consent to pay a light tribute. This new dominion henceforth took the name of Septimania.

The controul of the principal countries of the western world were now [A. D. 508] divided between the rival chiefs of the Franks and Ostrogoths. The one had reduced to, at least nominal, subjection all the nations and people of the north; and the other all those of the south, with the exception, it should be always interposed, as regards the latter, of Burgundy, the

inhabitants of which, from some incomprehensible motive, had been induced to array themselves against the former preservers of their independence, and to fight, for the subjugation of the Visigoths, under the banners of their old enemy. Similar changes of feeling and opinion, however, respecting enemies and friends might be adduced from the history of modern times, to shew that the Burgundians were not necessarily the more barbarous for their want of consistency—especially when the political morality of the period is taken into account. The realm of Theodoric comprehended all the Provinces lying along the European coast of the Mediterranean—Portugal, Spain, Septimania, Italy, and Illyria, with some equivocal claims to supremacy over the Allemanni, whose German possessions stretched over a wide district at the foot of the Alps. The kingdom of Clovis was much less extensive, embracing only the western, northern, and part of the southern Provinces of France, Belgium, a territory of questionable extent east of the Rhine, and pretensions to sovereignty over the Thuringians, and the German tribes dwelling between the Rhine and the shores of the Baltic. The Burgundians, though belonging geographically and from political situation to the Ostrogoths, and from sympathy to the Franks, may be fairly left out of calculation at present, as a people apart from all others, and enjoying their own laws, customs, creed and observances, in secure insignificance. It is sufficient to observe in passing that their national character differed considerably from their neighbours on each side. They had more of vivacity, but less polish than the subjects of Clovis, and at the same time more personal bulk and strength than those of Theodoric.

It must have occasioned no small chagrin to Clovis to behold the end of all his toils—the undivided sovereignty of France, for the attainment of which he had laboured throughout his stormy life, dashed from him by an enemy whose gigantic power he could not hope to subdue. He nevertheless endeavoured to appear contented with the glory and the gain he had secured, and he adroitly turned into a matter of triumph a circumstance, which, had his success been less qualified, he might have regarded as an impertinence rather than a compliment. Anastasius I., Emperor of the East, having quarrelled with Theodoric, to whom he had formerly sent the purple, despatched ambassadors to Clovis during the war between the Franks and Ostrogoths, to invest him with the robes and ensigns of patrician and consul. It was a formality which could have added nothing to the real power or dignity of the king, however it might have operated upon the Visigoth population, who to a great extent had become Romanized; and, on the part of the Emperor, it was an assumption of authority which had been perfectly extinguished. Clovis nevertheless, received the tokens of recognition with pleasure, and hastened to exhibit the Imperial ensigns before his subjects. A pageant was prepared at Tours in which the monarch rode through the city dressed in his Roman costume, with eagles borne around him, and officers accompanying the procession throwing handfulls of gold and silver among the admiring crowd.

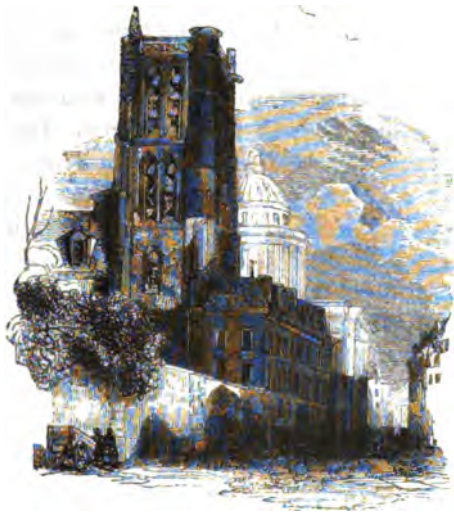
It is certain from his conduct, however, that the king himself was but ill



assured of the stability of the throne which he had founded. Finding it impossible to extend his power over other nations, he sought to rid himself of all who were likely to interfere with his designs among his own people and family. In this his Christianity interposed no check to his treachery and cruelty. The petty chiefs of tribes or bands who had hitherto been of his council, and shared with him a considerable portion of the royal authority, were first sacrificed to his jealousy; several of them being assassinated by his express orders, and others betrayed and put to death more secretly at his instigation. He is said to have killed two of the princes of his race with his own hand, of whom one was Ragnacaire, the chieftain by whom his government had been so ably directed when Clovis ascended the throne in his youth. Murder, perfidy, all the dark crimes of savage life, marked the latter days of the first Christian King of the Franks, who easily appeased his own conscience, or silenced the threats of his spiritual advisers, by founding churches and monasteries with the wealth of those whom he massacred. Under such a rule small advances towards general civilization could possibly have been made, and the little that was done towards instructing the people in their moral duties, or in art or science, was solely attributable to the clergy, who, however lenient their position compelled them to be to the crimes of those in power, maintained a constant struggle to enlighten their disciples, and, as far as was practicable, to ameliorate their condition.

The last public act of this reign was dictated by the churchmen with whom the king had surrounded himself—it was to assemble a great Council at Orléans for the regulation of Church discipline throughout his dominions—a

matter which had become necessary from the important part borne by the clergy in the civil administration of the realm. In November, 511, being the thirtieth year of his reign and the forty-fifth of his age, Clovis died at Paris—which, about the year 508, he had constituted his capital, and which has never since ceased to be a seat of government. He was buried in the church of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, which he and his queen Clotilda had founded immediately before his departure on the expedition which ended in the conquest of the Visigoths. This was the same structure to which the name of St. Geneviève was subsequently given; and of which



one of the ancient towers still remains, near the magnificent building with which the old pile has been replaced.

The law of primogeniture was not in force among the Franks; consequently on the death of Clovis his dominions were parted among his four sons—Thierry, who has already been spoken of, and Clodomir, Childebert, and Clotaire, the sons of Queen Clotilda. To Thierry was assigned Austrasia, or the Eastern countries of France, comprehending Lorraine, Alsace, part of Champagne, Luxembourg, and the Provinces of the Franks beyond the Rhine. His father had also bequeathed to him the districts which he had himself conquered from the Visigoths—Rouergue, Auvergne, Quercy, Albigeois, and all the frontier of Provence and Septimania. Clodomir had the Kingdom of Orléans, consisting of Beauce, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Berry. Childebert received the kingdom of Paris, comprising the Isle of France, a moiety of Champagne and of Normandy, with the rights—"more dangerous than useful"—which had been established by Clovis to the

suzerainty of Armorica, and Clotaire was appointed King of Soissons; his dominion extending over Artois, Flanders, and Picardy.

The three sons of Clotilda were not old enough at their accession to undertake the government of their respective States. Thierry, however, was soon called into action [A. D. 515], and fulfilled the promise of his earlier days by the skill and vigour with which he repulsed a piratical incursion of the Danes, who, under the conduct of their king or chief, Chlochilaic, had just entered the Meuse and marked their way, by pillage and destruction, as far as the Duchy of Gueldres. Theodebert, the son of Thierry, distinguished himself in this expedition, by defeating Chlochilaic—who was killed in the engagement,—by rescuing from the invaders all the booty they had taken, and by making the greater number of them prisoners. The young prince who thus gave earnest of his future prowess was, at the time, but eighteen years of age.

Five years after the defeat of the Danes, Thierry directed his arms against the Thuringians, at the instance of Hermanfroy, who was impatient at being obliged to share his throne with his brother Balderic. The ire of Hermanfroy had been inflamed by his wife Amalberge, niece of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, whose proud spirit could brook no rival in her throne. The means she had adopted to arouse his disgust illustrate the kind of practical reasoning which operated most effectually upon all classes at that barbarous period. She one day ordered the officers of her household to cover but half the royal table at dinner, and when her husband enquired the reason, she replied haughtily, that the prince who could content himself with half a realm, ought not to find fault with a table half covered. The argument was convincing, and with the aid of Thierry, Hermanfroy succeeded in dethroning his brother and obtaining the entire sovereignty of Thuringia. When the King of Austrasia demanded the reward of his services he received only taunts and mockery, and as Hermanfroy had placed himself under the protection of Theodoric, Thierry was compelled for the present to suppress his resentment.

Meanwhile the sons of Clotilda were growing into manhood, and their mother, who had not forgotten the debt of vengeance, which, though so long deferred by Clovis, she still considered due to the Burgundians, quitted the religious retirement at Tours, in which she had lived from the date of her husband's death, and went to Paris to enlist the sympathies of her children in her behalf. It was nothing that Gondebaud, who had slain her father and her mother, had been called to his account. Sigismond, the son of Gondebaud, reigned in his father's stead, and the old German leaven of hereditary feuds worked still so powerfully, even in the bosom of a Christian princess, that the queen could not be satisfied till the blood of her enemy had been poured forth as an atonement for her wrongs. "I entreat you my dear children," she is reported to have said, "to act in such manner that I shall have no cause to repent the tender care which I bestowed on your childhood. I wish you to resent the injuries which I have sustained; to avenge, with unflinching hand, the murder of my father and my mother."

Clodomir, King of Orléans, at once charged himself with the task enjoined, which, independently of gratifying his mother, opened a wide field for his personal ambition. He assembled an army, and marching into Burgundy, gave battle to and defeated Sigismond, and after ravaging his territory in the most cruel manner, compelled the inhabitants to deliver up their king, his wife, and two sons, prisoners. These he took with him to his capital, where he kept them in confinement till the following year [524], when, being on the point of paying a new visit to Burgundy, to complete the conquest of the country, he pretended to fear that his captives would escape during his absence, and, to prevent any attempt to do so, he caused them to be put to death. Their bodies were thrown together into a well, which is still exhibited near Orléans, in the ancient domains of the abbey of St. Mesmin. The captivity and untimely death of Sigismond, who was in no wise involved in the crimes which stained his father's memory, caused him to be regarded, both by the Franks and his own subjects, as a martyr; and it was generally believed for ages afterwards, that the waters of the well into which he had been cast were endowed with miraculous powers—especially in the cure of fever.

Clodomir had the same plea for his second as for his first campaign against the Burgundians:—their throne was occupied by a son of Gondebaud. But on this occasion the King of Orléans though he pursued the same course as had previously proved successful, could not induce the people to betray their new prince—Gondomar, a brother of Sigismond—into his hands. On the contrary, they mustered all their forces to repel the invaders, and offered him battle in the plain of Véseronce, near Vienna. The Franks, nevertheless, were once more victorious, and the fate of Burgundy appeared to be sealed. Clodomir, however, lost the fruits of his triumph through his savage eagerness. Pursuing the discomfited Burgundians from the field of their defeat, he outstripped most of his followers, and at last found himself almost alone amid a large number of his enemies, who recognising him by his long hair, which was the distinctive mark of the Frankish princes, and by his resemblance to Clovis, surrounded and made him prisoner. The assassination of the family of Sigismond was now avenged. The Burgundians cut off the head of Clodomir, and, setting it upon a pike, bore it aloft as a standard, and rallied their flying troops around it to renew the engagement. It was hoped, doubtless, that the knowledge of their monarch's fate would have dismayed the Franks. It served only to increase their fury, and to inspire them with a more insatiable thirst for vengeance. The army of Gondomar was totally routed, and none who fell into the hands of the vanquishers received quarter. All were cut to pieces; on every side remorseless havock gloated in blood, as well that of the peaceful natives who were incapable of resistance, as of those who bore arms in defence of their country. From end to end, wherever the torrent of war penetrated, Burgundy was reduced to the condition of a wilderness; but Gondomar—so strongly had the treacherous conduct of

Clodomir tended to create a sense of fidelity in the breast of the Burgundians—contrived to escape every danger; and on the withdrawal of the Franks he was enabled to re-ascend the throne of his father for a few years longer as an independent sovereign.

In 526, the death of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, removed the greatest obstacle which had been hitherto opposed to the extension of their dominion by the Franks, and the change of circumstances which ensued was almost immediately felt, not only throughout France and Italy but in all the countries which had been in alliance with the two predominant races. Thuringia and Burgundy were the first to feel that the preservation of their independence had been solely attributable to the protection they had derived from their neighbours, whose domestic troubles, fomented by the Franks, now engrossed their undivided attention, and left them neither leisure nor resources to devote to the affairs of others. Thierry, the Austrasian king, was perfectly prepared to seize the long desired opportunity of asserting his supremacy. In 531 he advanced with his own army and that of his brother Clotaire, King of Soissons, into Thuringia, where Hermanfroy, expecting them, had already prepared for their reception. The Thuringian troops, on the approach of the enemy, were drawn up in the neighbourhood of a river, the front of their camp being protected by deep pits and trenches, covered with twigs and turf. The Frankish cavalry, at their first onset, plunged into the snare which had been set for them; but instead of falling as was anticipated into inextricable disorder, they speedily recovered from their surprise, and, picking their way, defiled cautiously across the dangerous ground, and rushed with their accustomed fury on the foe, who were speedily routed with immense slaughter. The fugitives, delayed in their flight by the deep and dangerous ford of the Onstrud, were overtaken there before many of their number had crossed the stream, and were compelled to renew the contest under every disadvantage. The battle was of the most sanguinary description. The carnage indeed is said to have been such that the channel of the river was filled with the bodies of the dead, so that vanquished and vanquishers were able to pass over them as on a bridge. The pride and power of the Thuringians sunk together beneath the vigour of this terrible onslaught. The carcases of young men and veterans alike tainted the waters of the Onstrud; and heart and hope were wanting among the people for the continuance of a struggle which promised to desolate the entire country. Submission therefore became general, and Hermanfroy himself, on promise of good treatment from his old friend, came to deliver himself to Thierry and to crave his mercy. He was kindly received and even loaded with presents by his conqueror; but a few days after his surrender, as he was walking on the ramparts of the town in which the Franks were quartered, he was suddenly pushed off the wall by an unknown hand, and died in the fosse before assistance could be rendered to him. His death was too useful to his captor to escape general suspicion that it was not accidental, or that Thierry himself had not devised and probably

executed it. Gregory of Tours, who cannot be fairly accused of malignity in his History, broadly intimates the guilt of the king, and relates an adventure, of a somewhat similar character, which happened not long before to Clotaire, which leaves not the slightest doubt as to his capability to undertake and perform such an act of perfidy.

"While the two kings," says the good and simple minded old bishop, "were still in the territory of Thuringia, Thierry conspired against the life of Clotaire. He suborned some armed men, and put them in ambuscade in a passage through which the King of Soissons must needs pass to meet his brother, who had sent for him thither, as if he desired to confer with him in private on some affair of importance. On his arrival Thierry led him to a hall, across which some tapestry had been hung from one wall to the other, and behind which tapestry some armed men crouched till the appointed signal should be given for the execution of their murderous design. The tapestry however proved too scanty for its purpose. As Clotaire entered the hall he saw the feet of the assassins peering from beneath; and being thus put on his



guard, he instantly clapped his hand on his sword, a motion which did not escape Thierry's observation, but convinced him that his treacherous purpose had been detected. He feigned then to treat the matter as a premeditated jest, arranged but to frighten Clotaire, and at last, in order to convince him that fratricide had not been contemplated, he conferred on him, with many protestations of affectionate solicitude and esteem, a large silver bowl, with which Clotaire seemed perfectly satisfied; and after thanking his brother for his civility and bidding him adieu he departed for his own camp. Thierry however

was displeased at the result, and complained to his friends of the loss he had sustained, in parting with his silver basin without equivalent, and finally he said to his son Theodebert, 'Go, find thine uncle, and entreat him that, in token of his good will, he give thee the thing which I presented to him.' Theodebert did as he was directed, and from the courtesy of Clotaire obtained all that he desired. And true it is, that in such matters the craftiness of Thierry could not be surpassed."

The same year in which these events, so characteristic of the manners of the people and the age, transpired, Childebert King of Paris, made war, on behalf of his sister Clotilda, with Amalaric, chief of the Septamanian Visigoths. This prince had espoused the daughter of Clovis shortly after the death of Theodoric; but the difference of their faith had caused dissensions between them, and had ended in mutual disgust and hatred between wife and husband. Amalaric indeed is represented as having suffered his courtiers to insult the princess with impunity; and the populace, seeing the indifference with which she was regarded, proceeded so far in outrage as to throw filth upon her garments in her way to church. But violence seldom succeeds in making converts. Clotilda remained true to the faith in which she had been educated, and her Arian lord at last resorted to the extreme of marital coercion, in order to convince her of the dangerous nature of her heresy. "He beat her one day so brutally, that the unfortunate woman sent to her brother a handkerchief stained with her blood." All the fire of the proud Frank was aroused by the news of these indignities. He unfurled his standard, summoned his warriors to a rendezvous, and marched without delay to avenge the wrongs of his sister. The hostile armies met under the walls of Narbonne, and a victory over the Visigoths opened to Childebert the gates of that important city. Amalaric escaped from the battle, and might have retreated in safety, but his avarice inducing him to return to his palace in order to secure a casket of diamonds, he was surrounded and recognised by some Franks. He fled for safety to a neighbouring church, but the precincts of an Arian altar afforded no sanctuary from the wrath of a Catholic soldier, and he was pursued and put to death.

Beyond the mere punishment of Amalaric and, it may be, the acquisition of plunder, Childebert appears to have had no object in the Narbonnese expedition. Accordingly as soon as his vengeance was satisfied, and his troops were laden with booty, he returned to Paris, carrying with him his sister Clotilda, who, however, died on the road, in consequence of the injuries she had received from the Visigoth prince and people. Theudis was elected sovereign in the place of Amalaric, and Septimania was still permitted to retain its independence.

Thierry, on his return from Thuringia, which he annexed to his Austrasian kingdom, announced his intention of carrying the war into Burgundy [532]. He refused, on this occasion, to share the toils or rewards of his march with the sons of Clotilda; but his followers deeming his decision anti-national,

loudly exclaimed against it, and spoke of uniting under his brothers in a common body, without regard to the territorial divisions which had been made on the death of Clovis. Everything seemed verging towards revolt, when the king bethought him that, his Visigoth subjects of the South having rebelled against him, while Childebert was warring against their brethren of Septimania, he might offer his northern soldiers the plunder of Auvergne as a bribe to secure their allegiance. The bait was greedily swallowed, and the fertile plains that border Provence were speedily overrun and stripped of all that was valuable in the cities, towns, monasteries, and churches. Nothing was held too sacred for appropriation by these ruthless spoilers—nothing was too insignificant to tempt them to indulge their propensity for pillage and devastation. The lives of the Franks were lives of unreflecting, ignorant idleness, in which war, and what resembled war, with the gratification of passions rendered stronger and more brutal by indulgence, by the absence of equal laws and the restraints of civilized society, formed their chief excitements; and that which was most exciting was of course preferred. Hence it is that, in the history of every barbarous era, we light upon such records of cruelty and wantonness, as make us pause to reflect whether men have all, and always, had the same human nature, or their bosoms filled with the same kind of penetrable hearts.

While the Austrasians were occupied in Auvergne, Clotaire and his brother Childebert—accompanied by their nephew Theodebert—turned their arms against Burgundy, where they soon captured the cities of Autun and Vienna, and defeated Gondomar in a general engagement. They were compelled to retire however, without completing the conquest of the country—the term of military service among the great vassals of the crown having probably expired, and they being for the present satiated with spoil and slaughter, and desirous of regaining their homes. It was not till 534 that they returned to finish the ruin they had commenced, and then Gondomar himself was made prisoner, after a signal defeat, and his kingdom was parted among his conquerors. The realm of Burgundy at that period comprised not only the modern Province of that name, but Nivernois, Dauphiny, Savoy, and part of Switzerland and Provence.

In the interval between the two invasions of Burgundy, the children of Clodomir were murdered by their uncles. They were mere infants when their father was killed in battle, and had been carefully brought up by their grandmother at Tours, in the confident expectation that, at a proper age, they would receive investiture of the realm of Orléans as their undisputed inheritance. Clotilda took them one day to Paris, where Childebert then held his court; and he, conceiving the design of annexing half their dominions to his own, instantly wrote to his brother Clotaire to consult him on the subject. Clotaire hastened from Soissons, and consented at once to take part in the diabolical conspiracy. The two princes then demanded the custody of the children from the old queen, on pretence that they ought to be presented to the people as kings, and she, not doubting their intention, resigned the

guardianship which she had hitherto so well fulfilled. No sooner were the young princes in their power, however, than the kingly brothers despatched Arcadius, who retained the rank, though certainly not the office, of a Roman senator, to Clotilda, with a pair of scissors and a naked sword, desiring her to decide the fate of her grandsons. The queen was distracted at this instance of her children's barbarity, but, true to the principles which she had held and admired through life, she hesitated not between death and dishonour. With the vehemence of emotion she cried, "I had rather see them dead than shorn." She knew that, once deprived of their regal locks, the princes would be regarded by the Franks with scorn and contempt; and she thought it better that they should die princes than live to be mocked as degraded and coward beings, to whom life was dearer than reputation.

Her answer sealed the destiny of the lads. Brought into the presence of their uncles, Clotaire seized the eldest, and, throwing him on the floor, stabbed



him mortally in the throat. The second fell on his knees at the feet of Childeburt, who was moved to compassion by the youth, the innocence, and

the earnest prayers of the suppliant; and although the sacrifice was originally suggested by him, he joined in begging his brother to spare the boy's life. Clotaire however was insensible to pity or remorse; and, regardless alike of tears and entreaties, of the claims of natural affection, and the wrath of Heaven, he buried his dagger, still reeking with the blood of his first victim, in the heart of the second. Clodomir's third son was saved through the intervention of some "strong men," attracted to the spot by the children's cries. The name of the rescued prince was Clodoald, who, being brought up by churchmen, became a priest, and was eventually canonized. He still figures in the Romish calendar as St. Cloud. The attendants of the youths, for what purpose it is difficult to imagine, were massacred after their masters; and Clotaire, mounting his horse, departed tranquilly for his capital—"troubling his heart but little for the murder of his nephews." Childebert, who had less of iron in his nerves, withdrew into one of the suburbs of Paris while Clotilda enclosed the bodies of her little grandsons in one coffin, and buried them, with sacred hymns and all the pomp of funereal rites, in the tomb of Clovis [A. D. 533]. The people wept for the untimely fate of the murdered princes; but no one thought of bringing to public justice the royal criminals, who had merely executed their will—a common occurrence—on members of their own family, who stood in their path to greatness.

The King of Austrasia, meanwhile, pursued his ravages in Auvergne. He, from the first, had regarded the expedition merely as a means of gratifying his turbulent and rapacious followers with plunder; but, ere it had proceeded far, it assumed the aspect of a serious war. The Auvergnats, though slow to take arms, even in their own defence, when thoroughly aroused by the cruelty of their oppressors and the destruction of their homes, proved dangerous foes, whose courage and despair the military skill and discipline of Thierry's soldiers were not always able to overcome. At the siege of the castle of Outre, now Volore, he could make no impression on the defenders in open conflict, and was compelled to retire; though he subsequently gained possession of the place, through the treachery of a servant of the priest Proculus, who opened a gate for him at night, and let in a body of his soldiers, who took the garrison by surprise and thus overwhelmed them. The fortress of Méroliac held out to the last extremity, notwithstanding that Thierry, in order to overawe the inhabitants, conducted fifty of them, who had fallen prisoners into his hands, to the foot of the walls, and threatened to decapitate them under the eyes of their kinsmen and compatriots. Even when resistance appeared everywhere to have ceased, it was renewed by one who claimed affinity with the family of Clovis. This was Munderic, one of the wealthiest and most powerful chiefs of the country; who appears, however, to have been actuated by ambition rather than patriotism. He caused himself to be proclaimed king, and, rallying the natives to his standard, maintained a deadly struggle with the invaders, and, when beaten in the open plains, he threw himself into the castle of Victoriacum (probably Vitry, in Champagne), and

defied all the power and menaces of the Austrasians. The craft of Thierry procured him the fruits of victory. Munderic, listening to the flattering promises of his opponent, was induced to give him a meeting without the walls, and during the conference that ensued, he was seized and slaughtered. Still, so exasperated were the Auvergnats at the treatment they had received, that they prolonged the war almost without leaders, and utterly beyond hope of a favourable issue. To them it was a contest at once for freedom and for vengeance, in which those engaged had already lost all that could render life desirable. Thierry did not live to see the conclusion of the struggle he had provoked. Finding his end approaching he relinquished the conduct of his army to his son Theodebert, and returned to Metz, his capital, where he died in 534; just as his brothers Clotaire and Childebert had completed the conquest of Burgundy. Theodebert continued in Auvergne for some time longer, and succeeded in restoring peace by annihilating all who were capable of opposition. His sovereignty in the Province was at best but nominal, and his subjects therein could have furnished but an empty vaunt to a warrior king.

Next to that of Clovis, the reign of Theodebert is the most important of all that passed during the existence of the Merovingian dynasty. The king was almost wholly occupied beyond the Alps, and the magnitude of the events in which he took part reduce to insignificance the miserable quarrels and jealousies, the petty feuds and wars, which filled the latter days of his uncles Clotaire and Childebert. But in order to comprehend the transactions of the time, it is necessary to revert to the state of Italy, and of the Barbarian domination there from the period of the overthrow of the Western Empire.

When Odoacer and his Herulian followers destroyed the feeble remnant of the power of the Cæsars, which had been maintained at Ravenna after the conquest of Rome, the sovereign of Constantinople proclaimed himself master of Italy, as being the sole remaining chief of the ancient Republic. He did not attempt to recover the old territories of the Empire by force, but sought to create dissensions among the races by whom they were occupied, in order to gain an opportunity of forming alliances with some, and through them to attack and weaken the others. Hence he treated Odoacer as an enemy, but entered into friendly communication with Theodoric, and invested him with the dignity of Cæsar; an honour which the Ostrogoth turned to advantage, both with his Roman subjects, over whom it gave him a kind of sovereign right, and with the Heruli, against whom it furnished a ready pretext for hostilities. Theodoric eventually made himself king of Italy; but the Eastern Empire did not reap the harvest expected from his success. He was willing to recognise the superiority of the Emperor in rank, but rejected with scorn all claims to personal allegiance; and, as his government was wise and humane, the Italians, who were in all probability gainers by the definitive conquest of their country, could not be stirred to take part against their masters. They were permitted to retain their property, their laws, religion, municipal institutions and magistrates, and were perfectly content to leave to

the Goths the military occupations and honours which they prized. It was in vain that Clovis was bribed to become an auxiliary of the Empire; Theodoric was too firmly seated on his throne to be shaken by the enemies brought against him. At his death however his sceptre passed into female hands—those of his daughter Amalasontha, who endeavoured to retain the sway which had been established by her father. But the proud Ostrogoths refused to accord to a woman the authority which they had willingly submitted to in a man; and they sought to dethrone her. Amalasontha, fearful of the issue of the struggle, implored the aid of the Emperor Justinian, whose alliance she had secured at her accession; but before any succour could reach her, she was assassinated by her cousin Theodatus, who was immediately proclaimed king by his followers. Justinian, who had just reconquered the African Provinces of Rome from the Vandals, eagerly seized the opportunity of interfering in the affairs of the Goths with the design of chasing them altogether from Italy.

The Emperor, knowing the strength of his enemies, did not desire to attack them single-handed, but entered into negotiations with the Franks, who had long been at enmity with the Ostrogoths, for their assistance in his expedition. The two sons and grandson of Clovis listened willingly to his overtures, and the terms on which their military aid was to be granted had already been settled, and the Imperial gold distributed among their troops, when Vitiges, who succeeded Theodatus after a brief reign, also made proposals for the alliance of his powerful neighbours. Among other things he offered them the sovereignty of Provence and an extended frontier along the South.

The Franks accepted all the bribes that were tendered, and consented, in return, to remain neutral during the struggle. They saw that, whoever might lose by the war, they must necessarily be gainers, and they reposed for



awhile on their arms in their own land, ready to profit by any favourable occurrence. The mere negotiations enriched Theodebert—the most powerful

of the Frankish sovereigns—beyond expectation. He not only obtained a third of Provence, but the suzerainty of the country now inhabited by the Grisons, which Theodoric had subjected to his dominion; and Justinian, in order to flatter his vanity and secure his good offices, adopted him as his “son”—a compliment which obtained him a letter [A. D. 537] from the young monarch, in which he was called “*Father*”—no inappropriate return for so substantial a favour.

The war meanwhile had commenced. Belisarius had already made himself master of Naples and of Rome; and Mundilas, one of his officers, had captured Milan. Vitiges, defeated at every point, had recourse once more to Theodebert, and by his liberal concessions prevailed at last in obtaining his aid. As the Austrasian King, however, had promised to the Emperor—his “*Father*”—that the Franks should not take arms against him, he contented himself with sending beyond the Alps ten thousand Burgundians—not Franks, as he affirmed, though nevertheless subjects of Theodebert. In order more effectually to veil this ingenious fiction, he caused the auxiliaries to march in detached bands, not as disciplined soldiers, but as raw volunteers, without chiefs or standards. In Italy, however, they soon re-united under their leaders, and in 538 assisted Vitiges to retake Milan, and to execute on its garrison and inhabitants a most fearful vengeance. More than three hundred thousand males are said, by Procopius, to have been massacred in the sack of the city, among whom was Reparatus, the Prætorian Prefect, who was cut to pieces and thrown to the dogs, for the part he had taken in causing the place to be surrendered to the Imperialists. The licentious Burgundians took for their share of the spoils of Milan all the native women and girls, who, in addition to being dishonoured, were subjected to heavy ransom or perpetual slavery. The rapacity, want of discipline, and discontent of these mercenaries, soon tired even Vitiges of their aid, and he at length solicited Theodebert to recall them, and in future to assist him by his neutrality alone.

The Austrasian, however, had his own prize to win, and had never intended that his ally should recover the kingdom ruled by Theodoric. He accordingly construed the demand of Vitiges as a subject of offence, and announced his intention of proceeding to Italy in person, to put an end to the disorders complained of. He hastened to collect an army of one hundred thousand men, nearly all infantry, and advancing [539] through the mountain passes in the neighbourhood of Suza, descended, without opposition, into the plains of Piedmont, and speedily reached the banks of the Po. Both Vitiges and Belisarius had heard without alarm of the approach of the Franks; for each expected an ally; and each under this impression, had remained inactive in his encampment between Pavia and Tortona. The Ostrogoths, who were posted nearest to the Franks, opened their lines readily to receive the invaders as friends, and were utterly astounded by the sudden onset they had to sustain. Confusion among them was instantaneous and universal. They had

no time to regain their ground or to rally, and such was the impetuosity with which they were charged, that the disordered battalions were driven onward into the midst of the Imperial troops, who, not doubting that the presents of Justinian had won Theodebert to make common cause with them, joined the Franks in their pursuit, and helped to increase the carnage of the flight. Vitiges barely escaped from the field with life, and with difficulty threw himself, with the wreck of his army, into Ravenna, the seat of the Ostrogoth government. Theodebert meanwhile turned upon the Romans, who, now that it was too late to rectify their error, which was nigh proving fatal to them, for the first time perceived that the Franks had undertaken the expedition on their own account. It was in vain that Belisarius denounced the double treason of the enemy, and sought by threats, by entreaties, and by promises, to induce them to pause in their career of havoc and pillage. In vain he reminded his troops of the ancient triumphs of the Empire over the insolent barbarians. The Imperialists remembered most vividly the renown of the Franks, the weight and fury of whose attack they had felt; and being unable to recover from their panic, most of them threw down their arms, and dispersed for refuge in the towns and cities of Tuscany. The fertile but nearly desolate Provinces of Liguria and Æmilia were overrun and plundered, by victors "whose rage was not mitigated by any thoughts of settlement or conquest" [A. D. 539]. Among the cities which they captured and ruined was Genoa, where the most frightful excesses that barbarism and lust could prompt were perpetrated upon the inhabitants, thousands of whom are said to have been massacred; while a great number of women and children were reserved, in order to be sacrificed, after the old Druidical rites, to the God of War—an idolatrous custom which was observed with impunity in the camp of "the most Christian king."

The army of Theodebert, however, did not pass scatheless through this terrible campaign. At its entrance into Italy it had found the country half depopulated—so dreadful had the ravages of the war already been, throughout those beautiful regions. The want of provisions was immediately felt. Drove of cattle were drawn from France, and for awhile these served for the subsistence of the troops; but the supplies speedily failed, and bread and wine were not to be procured. The soldiers were constrained to drink the muddy waters of the Po, and to feed on distempered cattle, which quickly produced dysentery among them, and swept away more men than a defeat. The Franks became clamorous to return home, and being heavily laden with the rich spoils of the Goths and Romans, their chief was disposed to listen favourably to pacific overtures from Belisarius, and to recross the Alps,—at the foot of which he left a trusty officer named Bucelin, with a few troops to protect his march. His losses in battle and disease are estimated at between thirty and five-and-thirty thousand men. Justinian pretending that this retreat of Theodebert was in consequence of his defeat, assumed the title of Conqueror of the Franks, a degree of arrogance which so offended the Austrasian, that he

proposed a federal union with the Goths, and threatened not only to return into Italy, but to march, at the head of five hundred thousand men, to the gates of Constantinople, to chastise the insolent Emperor.

Belisarius, freed from the presence of the Gallic barbarians, was enabled to gather his forces once more, and to prosecute the war with vigour against Vitiges, who remained cooped up in Ravenna, afraid to stir beyond the fortifications, while his country was being reduced to subjection. In his capital, however, it was impossible to assail him except by famine; and the Imperialists had recourse to poisoning the waters and procuring the granaries of the beleaguered city to be secretly fired. Still Ravenna held out, till Belisarius brought the refined craft of the Greeks to operate upon the barbarian simplicity of the Ostrogoths; and the city was finally surrendered on condition that Italy should remain an independent kingdom, under the sceptre of Belisarius—a stipulation which the latter had no intention of maintaining, even when he acquiesced with and signed it.

Theodebert, meanwhile, was occupied by a domestic war which had broken forth between his two uncles, the Kings of Soissons and Paris. Clotaire, as ambitious as he was unscrupulous, invaded the territories of his brother Childebert, from whom he hoped to wrest his dominions, and to add them to his own possessions. He had proceeded triumphantly as far as the mouth of the Seine, when his followers were suddenly surrounded by the troops of his nephew Theodebert, who had engaged in the cause of the King of Paris. Clotaire, finding himself overpowered, was compelled to seek for safety in flight. He led his army into the forest of Arelaunum, now called the forest of Bretonne or Routot, where he entrenched himself, after the old barbarian manner, behind the trunks of large trees, felled and thrown across the accessible paths. "He had no longer any hope save in God," whose aid was consequently invoked by one who had hitherto braved His indignation. A fearful tempest ensued, in which the wind rent and carried away the tents of Childebert, and enormous hailstones crushed to death the Parisian soldiers, badly sheltered as they were under their light bucklers of hide-covered wood. The troops of Clotaire escaped this marvellous storm, which seems only to have lighted upon his opponents—those who were mustered in arms to repel his unnatural aggression. Such was the superstition of the times, however, that the allied kings saw in the disaster to which they had been subjected the direct interposition of Heaven; and, feeling that all parties had incurred Divine wrath by their quarrels and cruelties, they made peace with Clotaire, and permitted him to return to his capital.

The old Queen Clotilda, from the commencement of the war, had prayed day and night at the tomb of St. Martin of Tours for the reconciliation of her children; and when amicable relations were unexpectedly restored among them, the result was attributed by the people, with whom she had always been an object of reverence, chiefly to her piety. It is certain that such friendship as the princes were capable of feeling for each other was but little



impaired by their struggle for mastery; since in 543 the restless Clotaire readily joined his brother in a war which the latter undertook against the Visigoths of Spain. Both the sentiment of friendship and the tender affection of consanguinity appear to have been unknown among the Franks, who were mere warriors, regarding the ties of kindred and country in the nature of political alliances only, which might be severed or restored according to the interest or caprice of those among whom they existed.

The campaign of the Franks beyond the Pyrenees commenced under the most brilliant auspices. The Visigoths, who had long possessed the most fertile provinces of Spain, were a much more refined and warlike people than their neighbours, and they appear to have been unprepared for the war proclaimed against them. Pampeluna surrendered at the first assault, and Biscay, Navarre, and Catalonia were overrun and ravaged. Zaragossa sustained a siege, and escaped plunder, though not, it would seem, in consequence of the valour of the garrison. Finding themselves unable from want of provisions to maintain the defence, the inhabitants, according to the French writers, covered themselves with sackcloth, and, ordaining a general fast, went in solemn procession round the walls of the city, singing psalms and hymns, and invoking the protection of their patron, St. Vincent, whose tunic they carried on high as a standard. The procession was closed by groups of women, arrayed in black, with hair dishevelled and strewn with ashes, and uttering loud cries and lamentations. The Franks, who from their lines witnessed the strange ceremony, believed it at first to be some unholy incantation of Arian witchcraft; but learning the truth from a peasant, who



was made prisoner in an attempt to quit the town, they respected the piety of the people and the memory of St. Vincent, and consented to raise the siege. In return for his forbearance Childebert solicited and obtained the consecrated tunic of the Saint, which he took with him on his return to Paris, where he founded for its preservation the celebrated abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, which subsequently reckoned kings among its abbots, and of which time has spared a large square tower—a curious monument of the age of architectural transition from the classic style of the Romans to that now termed Gothic. A different version of the withdrawal of the Franks is given by Isidore of Seville; which however, as regards the siege of Zaragossa, is not inconsistent with the story related above, though it furnishes subsequent details which are there wanting. He says that the Franks were defeated by a Visigoth army; and that, being pursued to the Pyrenees, they were unable to cross the frontier, but were compelled to pay a large sum of

money for permission to defile through the narrow mountain-passes during a day and a night; at the expiration of which all who remained in the Spanish territory were cut to pieces by the victors.

But if vanquished on this occasion, the Franks amply avenged themselves the following year, 544, when they advanced against the Visigoths of Septimania, and destroyed the army brought against them. The Goths were encamped near Certe on the arrival of the enemy, and it being Sunday, their sentinels had refused to incur divine wrath by doing military duty. The less scrupulous Franks consequently came upon them by surprise, effected an entrance into their camp, drove them thence to the sea shore, and slaughtered them to the last man. To commemorate this victory Clotaire caused to be struck at Marseilles, a medal, bearing the inscription "VICTORIA GOTHICA." The war, however, like many others of the period, appears to have had no object, except pillage and the indulgence of a passion for military exercise. Septimania still maintained its independence, and the Visigoths and Franks preserved their former boundaries.

Hostilities, meanwhile, between the Ostrogoths and Imperialists, with brief intervals of repose, were continued in Italy. Vitiges had been sent captive to Constantinople, and established in honourable independence in Asia, with the rank of senator and patrician. Belisarius had been recalled by the jealous Emperor, and after experiencing a variety of fortune, according as his own bravery, the misconduct of his wife, or the envy of Justinian gained ascendancy, he was sent back to recover the dominion which had been in great part wrested from the imbecile generals who had succeeded to his command. The Gothic throne, in eight months, had received two new sovereigns, both of whom had been assassinated, and Totila, a soldier of considerable skill and invincible courage, having been raised to supreme command among his countrymen, was making rapid progress towards the restoration of the extended realm and power of Theodoric. Trevisa and Pavia first submitted to the young and ardent monarch, who having fleshed his victorious arms in an engagement with about four times his number of Imperialists, had turned upon Lower Italy, reduced Naples, Cumæ, Lucania, Apulia, and Calabria to subjection, returned to the Tiber, and laid siege to and captured Rome, from which it is said all but about five hundred citizens had fled with the degenerate garrison, to whom the defence of the capital had been entrusted. The Eternal city was pillaged [547] and abandoned, during forty days, to dreary solitude, when Belisarius, having re-entered it, again planted on its walls the imperial eagles, and prepared for a decisive struggle.

The strength, the talent, and the valour of the Imperialists and Goths, under their present leaders, were fairly balanced, and each regarded Theodebert as arbiter of the quarrel at issue. Justinian sought to conciliate his good offices by ceding to him what was called the legal possession of Provence, including Arles, still the seat of a Prætorian Prefect, and Marseilles, which continued to boast some of the most important commercial establishments in

the world. The Franks were formally absolved from allegiance to the Emperor, their kings were authorised to preside at the games of the circus in Arles, and it was decreed that gold coin, struck in Gaul, and marked with the name and image of the Frank sovereigns—a privilege which was denied even to the Persian monarchs—should pass current in all the Provinces of the Eastern Empire. Totila, on his side, entreated the friendship of Theodebert, and asked his daughter in marriage; but the haughty grandson of Clovis would not listen to this last proposal. He told the ambassadors of the Goth that his daughter was destined to become the bride of a king; and that he could not recognise as King of Italy one who had failed to have his title acknowledged by the people, to preserve Rome, to repair its shattered walls, and to exhibit himself at the national games as master of the city.

Theodebert, indeed, had resolved to pursue his former policy, and to play an independent part in the war. His general, Bucelin, who had remained in the neighbourhood of the Alps with the troops left there in 539, was now sent with a strong army into Italy, with orders to treat both Ostrogoths and Imperialists as enemies. The pretext for hostilities against the Emperor was his assumption of the title of *Francicus*—synonymous with victor of the Franks—a piece of vanity which must have appeared ridiculous even in the eyes of his own subjects. Bucelin advanced, overran the greater part of Liguria and Venetia, and being joined by a body of seventy-five thousand Allemanni, passed on to Lower Italy, where they ravaged the cities and towns of Campania, Lucania, Bruttium, Apulia, and Calabria, and whence they drew immense treasures to send home into France and Germany. The Franks being Christians and Catholics, are said to have contented themselves with “simple pillage and occasional murder,” while the Allemanni, who were still Pagans, robbed the churches, melted or profaned the consecrated vessels, and stained with the blood of the faithful the altars and shrines of the saints. Already master of the north of Italy, of Bavaria and Pannonia, and suzerain of some of the barbarian races settled on the banks of the Danube, Theodebert now threatened to carry the war into Greece, and to assail the Emperor in his capital. The Gepidæ, the Lombards or Longobards, and many of the Goths were flocking to the Frankish standards, to share the glory and the spoil to be derived from conquering the remnants of Roman power and greatness. The Imperialists were in the utmost terror, when, as if to relieve them, and to give the cause of civilization a new chance for resuscitation, Theodebert, according to Gregory of Tours, was seized with his last sickness, and after lingering some time under a slow fever, died [A. D. 547]. Agathias has given a different account of the death of the Austrasian King. He says, that while hunting the wild bull in the Belgic or German forests, the animal overturned a tree on the head of the monarch, who expired in consequence of the injuries sustained on the same day. In the same year, Clotilda, the widow of Clovis, died at Tours “full of days and laden with good works.” Her two sons caused her body to be conveyed to Paris with great pomp, and to be buried

in the same tomb with her husband, her daughter, and her² murdered grandsons.

Theodebalde, the son and successor of Theodebert, was¹ a child, paralysed in body and imbecile in intellect. His accession was immediately marked by disaster among his troops beyond the Alps, who, left to their own guidance, continued hostilities for no other object than that of pillage; and whose disorders armed Goths and Italians alike against them. Bucelin was compelled to retreat from the straits of Sicily, and moving slowly towards Capua, found at the bridge of Casilinum the army of Narses, who had succeeded Belisarius in the command of the Imperial forces. Lothaire, the chief of the Allemanni, had departed for Upper Italy to deposit his spoils in security, intending to come back speedily to the aid of his ally. He was destined never to return. The plunderer of churches was seized with a strange disease on the banks of lake Benacus, and he and the greater portion of his army were swept away. Bucelin and his Franks therefore had to sustain the struggle for mastery with Narses single handed. On both sides the dispositions for the coming battle shewed that each leader had staked his fortune on the issue; and the fate of the world trembled in the balance. The hostile troops encountered; the Franks, chiefly infantry, unable to repel the assault of the Roman cavalry, were stricken with panic at the onset, reeled, and were driven into inextricable confusion. Bucelin and the greatest part of his followers perished on the field, in the waters of the Vulturnus, or by the hands of the enraged peasantry of the neighbourhood, as they sought to escape pursuit. Narses returned with the ensigns of victory to Rome, which then, for the last time, beheld the semblance of a triumph. The Franks lost all their conquests and possessions in Italy, from which they were utterly expelled, and the country was once more annexed to the dominions of the so called Emperor of the Romans [553].

Theodebalde did not long survive the overthrow of his Italian power. He died in the same year, and as he left no child, his kingdom, according to the law of the Franks, ought to have been divided between his two uncles. Clotaire, however, seized for himself the treasures of Austrasia, without sparing even the Queen Vultrade, whom he shortly afterwards transferred from his own bed to that of a duke, his vassal. Childebert, too feeble to reclaim the full share of his nephew's inheritance, to which he was entitled, contented himself with urging Chramme, the eldest son of Clotaire, to whom the government of Auvergne had been entrusted, to revolt against his father and to claim all the Austrasian provinces for himself. Chramme needed little incentive to such a course. He was a debauched and profligate young man, without a thought or feeling beyond the gratification of his fierce passions; and his excesses had drawn on him the execrations of all classes of the people. While holding his court at Clermont his outrages were of such a daring character, that he scrupled not to cause even the daughters of senators to be seized under the eyes of their fathers, and borne away to the polluted recesses

of his palace. Rebellion was but sport to one, the zest of whose indulgences was thus heightened by preludes of the darkest crimes.



Chramme watched his opportunity, and while his father was engaged on the banks of the Rhine with the Saxons, who had sought to invade France from Germany, he took possession of Poitiers, the centre of the ancient realm of the Visigoths, while his uncle Childebert caused himself to be proclaimed King of Aquitaine. The population, remembering their ancient independence, and still unreconciled to the Franks in creed and manners, flocked to the standard of Clotaire's enemies, and, traversing the country in triumph, fixed the seat of the new government [555] at Limoges.

The King of Soissons, meanwhile despatched his two sons, Caribert and Gontran, to Limousin, with a large body of Franks and Burgundians, charged to expel the rebel and usurper from the provinces they had invaded. The brothers came up with Chramme as he lay encamped on the heights of the Black Mountain, whence the Vienne, the Creuse, and the Vezère have their source. Here they pitched their tents, and each army lay watching the motions of the other, not wishing to be the first to attack, when a storm, such as that which had formerly saved Clotaire from destruction in the forest of Bretonne, burst over the neighbourhood. The same superstitions which had operated so powerfully on their father and uncle, now prevented the sons of Clotaire from embroiling their hands in each other's blood; and a rumour which diffused itself among the troops—as a special revelation probably—that the king had been slain by the Saxons, induced Caribert and Gontran to retire in haste from the scene of civil war, and to march upon Burgundy. Chramme, at safe distance, pursued them, invaded Châlons, captured Dijon, and in Champagne effected a junction with Childebert, whose alliance enabled

him to keep the field for two years longer. The Saxon war, of which, however, the details and duration are unknown, is believed to have favoured the revolt of Chramme by keeping his father occupied at a distance; but the death of Childebart, in 558, put an end at once to his hopes and his courage. Childebart left no son, and his two daughters being unable, according to the Salian law, to inherit the throne, the whole Kingdom of France was reunited under the sceptre of Clotaire, and Chramme, deprived of all support, tendered his submission and was forgiven by his father.

The next two years are barren of Historical events, but at the end of that time Chramme, from what cause is unknown, fled from the court of his father, and found refuge, with his wife, Kalte, and his two infant daughters, the eldest of whom was but three years old, with Canao, who bore the title of King of Britany—a new monarchy which had sprung into existence since the death of Clovis. The Armorican confederation, it has been already shewn, had recognised the suzerainty of the King of the Franks upon his conversion, on condition of having their laws, customs and form of government respected. They had remained faithful allies rather than subjects of their Catholic neighbours, from that period till the civil wars which occurred on the partition of the kingdom; when they felt themselves at liberty to choose the monarch they preferred for their patron, to change that patron, and to make war and peace at pleasure. The conquest of Britain by the Saxons had caused the immigration into Armorica of great numbers of British who refused to submit to the yoke of their new masters, and whose free and independent spirit had infused new vigour into the old and expiring race of the Celts. With the assistance of these auxiliaries, who were sufficiently numerous and important to impose their own name—still extant—upon their adopted country, the inhabitants openly rejected the Frankish claims to allegiance and gave to their native chiefs the title of kings. The Counts of the Bretonne Marches (frontiers) were repulsed, and compelled to maintain an incessant struggle to prevent the absolute extension of their dominions by the regenerated Bretons. This was the state of Britany at the time Chramme solicited the protection of Canao. He was received with open arms by the now declared enemy of his father; but the insult was fearfully avenged by Clotaire.

That savage old man, the moment he was able to quit the Rhenish frontier, hastened to Britany with a numerous army, flushed with victory, and eager for spoil, of which they had obtained little from the Saxons. The Franks and Bretons encountered near Dol. Canao wished to attack by night and alone the camp of the enemy, in order to spare his ally the impiety and supposed pain of fighting against his father; but Chramme had no such refined scruples, and insisted on accompanying his protector to the field. The Bretons were repulsed and driven in disorder from the assault; and prince Chramme, leaving Canao to retreat as he might, fled for personal safety to the sea-shore, where he engaged a vessel to bear him to another land. He

had just sufficient affection, however, to induce him to await the arrival of his wife and children; a delay which proved fatal to him. A band of Franks, eager in pursuit, overtook him, after capturing Kalte and her two daughters, and by order of Clotaire the family was enclosed in a small hut, bound to the timbers with strong cords to prevent their escape, and the place being



set on fire, they were consumed together in the flames [560]. In no single action of the life of Clotaire does a feeling of humanity appear to have entered his bosom.

Two years after the death of Chramme, the king himself, now sole monarch of France, died at Compiègne, of a fever, brought on by over-exertion in hunting, in the forest of Cuise (now Compiègne). He had reigned altogether fifty years, and the sole benefit the country had derived from his sway during that long period was the erection of several churches and monasteries, by which he sought to propitiate Heaven to overlook the enormity of his crimes. On his death-bed he is said to have exhibited some tokens of piety and penitence; but these were the effects of superstition rather than remorse; and his character remains a blot upon the history of even the turbulent and wild times in which he lived.

The kingdom was left by Clotaire to be divided, according to the common law of inheritance in the country, among his four sons, Caribert, Gontran, Chilperic, and Sigebert; but, like their father, these princes had less respect for justice and right than for the law of the strong hand and the might of

their adherents. The very partition of their dominions was not effected without a civil war. Gregory of Tours, referring to this period, bursts into the following exclamation: "It wearies me to recount that multitude of civil wars, beneath which the realm and nation of the Franks was bowed down, and in which we saw those times of which the Saviour spoke, as the commencement of tribulation—'The brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.'.. O kings," the good bishop has added, "perceive ye not that ye are ruining nations on those fields of battle which the sweat of your fathers watered? Remember the acts of Clovis, the head and fount of all your victories... And that, when he achieved them, he had not, like you, either gold or silver in his coffers! What impels ye? What seek ye? In what do ye not abound? Delicacies are gathered in your dwellings. Corn, wine and oil overflow in your storehouses; gold and silver are piled in your treasuries. Ye have need of nothing; except that, being without peace in your hearts, ye are deprived of the grace of God!" Gregory had seen and lived amid the evils he deplored, and could not avoid lamenting the misfortunes of his country, the state of which realised the appalling description of Tacitus of "a period fertile in miseries, deluged with the bloodshed of war, rent by rebellions, and cruel even in the midst of peace!"

Chilperic seems to have begun the confusion. Desirous of supplanting his brothers and making himself sole king, he scarcely spared time to accompany



his father's corpse to Soissons, where it was buried, ere he hastened to Braine, a small village some leagues from thence, where Clotaire had his favourite

residence. He seized there the royal treasures which had been kept in a subterranean chamber, in iron-bound coffers, triple-locked, and, distributing them liberally among the Franks of the neighbourhood, induced them to proclaim him king. He then hastened to Paris with all the troops and followers he could collect, posted a number of them in the towers which protected the two bridges of the city—at that time limited to the small island in the Seine called the “Ile de la Cité,”—and prepared to defend his usurpation to extremities. His sole reign however was of short duration. His brothers united their forces against him, and being supported by the great vassals who conceived themselves bound to see the law carried into effect, they compelled him, after a brief struggle, to be content with his proper share of the realm.

According to M. Thierry, in his ‘Ten years of Study’ “This partition of the whole of Gaul and of a considerable portion of Germany, was made by drawing lots, like that which had taken place, half a century before, between the sons of Clodowig (Clovis). There were four corresponding lots, with some variations in the four portions of territory, designated the kingdoms of Paris, Orléans, Neustria and Austrasia. Haribert (Caribert) obtained in the drawing the part of his uncle Hildebert (Childebert); that is, the realm which received its name from Paris, and which extended from north to south, and comprised Senlis, Melun, Chartres, Tours, Poitiers, Saintes, Bordeaux and the cities and towns of the Pyrenees. Gontran had the State of Orléans, which had been the portion of his uncle Clodomir, and all the territory of the Burgundians from the Saône to the Vosges, the Alps and the Sea of Provence. The lot of Chilperic was his paternal inheritance, the realm of Soissons—called by the Franks *Neoster-Rike*, or the western kingdom, and which was bounded on the north by the Escaut, and on the south by the course of the Loire. The eastern kingdom, or *Oster-Rike*, fell to Sigebert, who, besides Auvergne, had all the north east of Gaul, and Germany, as far as the frontier of the Saxons and the Slaves. In addition to this, it seems that the towns had been counted one by one, and that their number alone had served as the basis for fixing the four lots; since, to say nothing of the boundaries of the three kingdoms, there were a number of *enclaves*, or domains entirely severed, by intermediate lands, from the jurisdiction to which they were annexed, for which it is impossible otherwise to account. Thus Rouen and Nantes were included in the portion of Chilperic, and Avranches in that of Caribert, who also possessed Marseilles, while Gontran had Aix and Avignon, and Soissons, the capital of Neustria, was surrounded, as if for the purposes of blockade, by four towns—Senlis, Meaux, Laon and Rheims—which belonged to the kingdoms of Paris and Austrasia.”

This singular division of territory, in which four independent States were intermixed and almost confounded in every direction, must necessarily have produced an extraordinary complication of political, commercial, and legal interests, and have been a fruitful source of jealousies and quarrels—especially

among the fierce and unprincipled men into whose hands the government of the several nations had fallen, "to whom," it has been said, "murder was an every day occurrence, and whose lives were a perpetual conflict." There is little else to recount, indeed, in the reigns of the sons of Clotaire, save a lengthened procession of crime and horror—of war, treachery, public massacre and private assassination."

Sigebert, King of Austrasia, had scarcely received the homage of his new subjects at Metz, before his presence was required beyond the Rhine to repel an invasion of Thuringia by the Avars or Abares. This people is said to have been a horde of the ancient Huns, long settled in Mœsia (Servia or Bulgaria), whom the court of Constantinople had instigated to quit their homes in hopes of capturing a rich booty by an incursion into the territory of the Franks. Gregory of Tours calls them Chuni. "They were for the most part," according to Père Daniel, "of a stature approaching the gigantic; and of such hideous aspect as to affright the beholder. They had long hair, thrown backwards, and separated with bands and plaited tresses, which caused their heads to appear like those of the furies, depicted as bristling with serpents." But their wild and formidable looks, which had awed the legionaries of the Eastern Empire, had little effect upon the intrepid and stout-hearted Austrasians, who hesitated not to offer them battle the moment they met. Sigebert himself fought among his free warriors in the foremost rank, and the invaders were defeated and driven back to the banks of the Elbe, where they were compelled to sue for peace [A. D. 562]. They returned to the attack, however, four years afterwards, when their former disgrace was retrieved and avenged by a complete victory, produced, if contemporary historians are to be believed, through the assistance of unhallowed spirits, invoked against the Franks, at the moment of joining battle, by the Hunnish magicians.

It may not be uninteresting here to observe that the Abares, in common with their Scythian brethren, have been universally mentioned by ancient authors as the most repulsive of all the known races of mankind. "Their cheeks were tattooed all over. Their necks were thick, and their heads bent backward. They appeared less like men than overgrown dwarfs. They fed on grass, roots, and raw flesh, which they softened and warmed under the saddles of their horses. They were ignorant of the use of houses, which they fled from as tombs. Their clothing consisted of a cloth, or the skin of an animal, worn till it rotted off the body. Their horses served them for table and bed, and they did not dismount even at their public counsels." Jornandes thus reports their origin: "There were introduced into the army of Filimer, King of the Goths, sorceresses or female soothsayers, who having been expelled from the Gothic camp, retired into the depths of the wild forests, where, becoming acquainted with the Fauns, they gave birth to the monstrous Huns, who first infested the Eastern shores of the sea of Azof, but afterwards passed over to the other side, guided by a hind which shewed them the way.' Their hereditary claims to sorcery being thus established, their descendants,

the Hungarians and Bohemians, have preserved even to the present day the supernatural pretensions of their ancestors; and one branch of their reputed offspring—the Gypsies—have carried the old art of divination and the old thirst for plunder and love of wandering into every country of Europe.

Without presuming to dispute the causes of the victory of the Abares, it is certain that they did not profit by it so as to make a conquest, or to gain a settlement. Indeed it seems to have led to the establishment, for a time, of friendly intercourse between them and the vanquished. Sigebert having fallen into their hands as a prisoner, was greatly admired by them for his personal beauty, grace, and accomplishments. The King of the Abares not only gave him his freedom, but loaded him with presents; and Sigebert, in return, provided him with the means of subsistence for his people during their retreat to their own country. He sent them, Menander informs us, droves of oxen, herds of sheep, and large quantities of flour, and charged himself with seeing that all their necessities were supplied till they reached once more the borders of Moesia. This courtesy and simplicity of the Huns, it must be remarked, is strangely at variance with the savage atrocity invariably attributed to them as a distinguishing characteristic.

The Lombards next appeared on the Burgundian frontier [A. D. 570]. Two years before, they had invaded, and under the conduct of Alboin their king, made themselves masters of Upper Italy, and they already sought to extend their conquests, and to recover the wide dominions of Theodoric the Goth. With this view they had crossed the Alps, and begun ravaging the territory of the Franks. It was in vain that Gontran despatched against them an army, commanded by the Patrician Amatus. The general was defeated and slain, and the Lombards proceeded through the country in triumph, till the accumulation of their spoil rendered it necessary for them to return in order to place it in security. The success of that foray tempted the followers of Alboin to undertake a second. Again they descended into Burgundy, and again Gontran made every exertion to arrest their progress and drive them from the country. The chief he selected to fill the place of Amatus, was Eunius, surnamed Mummol, a man of energy and perseverance, equally skilled in the debates of the council and in the arrangements required for a field of fight. Pæonius, his father, Count of Auxerre, desiring to have his son trained in all the accomplishments of the age, had sent him with rich presents to the court of Gontran, where his high talents procured him the notice of the sovereign and the friendship of the nobles; and he was soon regarded as the most important of all the ministers and officers of Orléans.

Mummol advanced at once against the Lombards, who were entering Dauphiny, and, on reaching Mustia Calmel, he found them already enclosed among the mountains in the neighbourhood of Embrun by the Burgundians, who, having suffered them to enter the defiles without opposition, had cut down the trees on every side, and thrown them across all the outlets so as effectually to prevent their advance or retreat. The Franks, guided by the

peasantry and woodmen, explored the secret paths of the wilderness and came upon the enemy [572], when, both from want of preparation and the nature of the place in which they were entangled, they were utterly incapable of resistance. Nearly all the Lombards were captured. Among those who took part in the expedition, not as priests, armed with the cross and the gospel, but as soldiers, girt with sword and dagger, and accoutred with helmet and cuirasse, were the Frankish bishops of Gap and Embrun—Salonius and Saggiarius. Church dignities had begun to be regarded, like others, as military appointments, and the old Roman incumbents having died off, and their places been supplied with Franks, feudal and secular notions had taken place of the primitive simplicity of the clergy, and war and the chase were pursued by the wealthier ecclesiastics with fully as much ardour as the proper duties of their sacred calling. Salonius and his clerical comrade are said to have killed a great number of the enemy with their own hands.

The invaders were little discouraged by their defeat. Twenty thousand Saxons, who had assisted Alboin in the subjugation of Italy, joined by many of their adventurous companions, passed the Alps in the ensuing year, animated by a double thirst for vengeance and for booty. They encamped near Estoublons, in the heart of Provence, whence they extended their ravages on all sides—pillaging and destroying the neighbouring cities, towns, and villages, and carrying away the inhabitants as slaves. The intrepid Mummol however left them not long to the indulgence of their barbarian appetites. Coming up by forced marches he was enabled to fall upon them unawares, and “until night put an end to the carnage, he ceased not from slaughter.” On the following morning the contest was renewed. The Saxons, though their ranks were thinned, still presented an undismayed front, and expressed their determination to dispute the honours of victory with their assailants. The issue appears to have been doubtful; for Mummol consented to treat with the enemy, and permitted them, on relinquishing their spoils, to return unmolested into Italy. The Frank was probably influenced in his conduct upon this occasion, by the straits to which his sovereign was then reduced, in a war which he was compelled to maintain against his brother Chilpéric, who had invaded his kingdom and sought to dethrone him.

The peace or truce thus patched up was, as might be expected with such negotiators, of short duration. In the year 574 two hundred thousand Saxons—according to contemporary authorities—debouched in two bands from the Alps, by the routes of Nice and Embrun, and uniting their host near Avignon, turned their march northwards, along the banks of the Rhone, towards the centre of the Frankish dominions. Their descent was in the time of harvest, when all the corn and fruits of the country were in the fields, the vineyards and the orchards, and the inhabitants had nothing, according to their wont, in concealment, as a reserve against the perpetual incursions to which they had now for centuries been subjected. Quarters themselves upon the natives, the Saxons reaped, garnered and thrashed the

corn in the ear, and parting the produce among them, left nothing for the subsistence of those who had prepared and sown the land. When one district was thus exhausted they advanced to another. But their confidence in their numbers and prowess carried them too far. Mummol, having drawn together a large army, awaited them under the walls of Lyons, at the confluence of the Rhone and the Saône, and when they presented themselves in order to effect a passage, they found a stern and unexpected obstacle. A battle ensued, and the Saxons, encumbered with baggage, and unable to bring more than half their troops into the field at the same moment, were routed,—leaving the greater part of their spoil in the hands of the Franks. In their retreat they avenged their disaster and disgrace upon the unhappy Auvergnats, into whose country they fled. The people here, however, contrived to impose on their oppressors by ransoming their friends and effects with gilt copper, which the barbarians took for standard gold. Nor were the Saxons much more fortunate on their return to their own country. The Suevi had established themselves there during the absence of the former settlers, and many a battle and much bloodshed took place before the two races could agree to an amicable division of possessions which were ample for both.

When their old allies had abandoned the attempt upon France the Lombards returned to the scene, and again in 576 invaded the kingdom of Gontran. They crossed the Alps in three large bodies commanded by Amon, Zaban and Rhodan—chiefs who had distinguished themselves in the conquest of Italy; and forming a junction at the foot of Mont-Genèvre, they spread themselves over Burgundy. Rhodan halted before Grenoble. Zaban went to besiege Valence, and Amon marched into Provence and displayed his banners under the walls of Arles, imposing heavy tribute upon all the places near which he passed. Aix, among the rest, purchased exemption from pillage at the price of twenty-two pounds of silver. From the rugged plain still known by the name of *La Crau*, the invader drove all the flocks of the High Alps, which usually pastured there in the bad season, and would have left the inhabitants destitute, but for Mummol, who was now on his rear, and overtook him ere he could extricate himself from among the mountains. In the battle that followed Rhodan was wounded by a stroke of the Frankish general's lance, and with difficulty escaped to the neighbouring heights, whence, with not more than five hundred men, he passed into Italy. The rest of his army perished on the field. Zaban, at this time, had also put his troops in motion to return home. The rapidity of Mummol, however, outstript his speed, and a conflict was forced upon him in the neighbourhood of Embrun, where his army was entirely cut to pieces. Amon, having learned the fate of his countrymen, would not risk an engagement; but threw himself into one of Alpine gorges, hoping to pass, without detection, by an unknown route into the Lombard plains. He was scarcely more fortunate nevertheless than his brethren. The greater portion of his followers found graves among the eternal snows and solitudes which they had invaded; or



were engulfed in the chasms and torrents of the mountains : while all the booty they had collected was obliged to be abandoned. This succession of disasters had its effect upon the Lombards, who were thenceforward more cautious in making demonstrations of hostility against the Franks; and shortly afterwards their attention was too exclusively engrossed by their domestic troubles, to allow them to profit by the dissensions and wars of their neighbours.

It cannot have escaped observation in the narrative of these Abaric, Lombard and Saxon incursions, that the restlessness of the barbarian hordes seems again to have acquired a resemblance to that of the days when the Cimbri and Teutons first sought a home among the Gauls. It is impossible now to ascertain the primary cause of the great revolution which thus from time to time drove the natives of Scythia and Scandinavia towards the south-west ; but that the movement itself was continued long after the fall of the Roman Empire is certain, and it does not appear to have finally ceased till the ninth or tenth century. M. Guizot attributes the wars of Thierry and Clotaire with the Thuringians and Saxons, and those of Theodebert and his successors in Italy, to the pressure from the north-east of new tribes which were continually urging forward the old settlers and compelling them to seek other colonies. "The warlike expeditions of the times," he says, "were undertaken from necessity, and not as mere forays for pillage." The Thuringians were impelled onward by the Saxons, the latter by the Danes, and these in turn by the Normans, the Huns, the Bohemians, and the whole Slavonian race. "Populations were incessantly displaced, and hurled upon each other. No settlement could be established. The nomadic life re-commenced in every

quarter; and the interior of Europe was kept in perpetual disorder. In Germany, which was the very furnace of agitation, the turmoil was greater than in any other part of Europe; and in France it was greater than in Italy; but nowhere could society become fixed or regulated, and barbarism was prolonged, and heightened on all sides."

During the first war which Sigebert had sustained against the Abares, in 562, his brother Chilperic, who inherited all the fierceness and want of humanity of Clotaire his father, regardless of the danger which threatened to overwhelm the whole dominion of the Franks, embraced the opportunity to make himself master of Rheims and several other towns which had been apportioned to the kingdom of Austrasia. Sigebert in return, as soon as he had freed himself from the presence of the foreign enemy, turned upon and captured Soissons with its defender, Theodebert, one of the sons of Chilperic, who was sent prisoner to the castle of Pontyon, in the Pertois. He afterwards defeated Chilperic himself, stripped him of the domains he had conquered, and, but for the interposition of their two brothers, he would have been deprived of his kingdom. In the end Soissons was restored to its monarch, and Theodebert set at liberty, but not till he had taken an oath never again to bear arms against the King of Austrasia.

These family wars were followed by domestic troubles of another kind, which stain the annals of the age with the blackest crimes. Neither Christianity nor the remnants of Roman civilisation amid which they had been brought up, had been able to wean the Merovingian princes from the gross manners and customs they had derived from their German ancestors. Polygamy was commonly practised among them. Clotaire had several wives at the same time, two of whom were sisters, and both women of low birth. Caribert, King of Paris followed the example of his father. He first espoused a beautiful damsel, named Meroflède, the daughter of a wool-comber, afterwards the daughter of a herdsman, and subsequently, the sister of Meroflède. The number is known to have exceeded six. Gontran though favourably spoken of by Gregory of Tours, did not hesitate publicly to maintain a concubine. Chilperic, besides one or more wives, supported a number of mistresses, of whom the most beautiful and the most celebrated was Frédégonde, a girl of humble parentage from Montdidier, whom Queen Audovère had taken into her service, and who eventually, by her charms, and talents, supplanted her mistress in the heart of the king. Sigebert alone suffered pride of birth to regulate his amours. He sought a royal alliance, and demanded and obtained of Athanagilde, King of the Visigoths of Spain, his second daughter Brunehaut, in marriage. Shortly afterwards, Chilperic was smitten with the attractions of Galswinthe the sister of Brunehaut, and desired to make her his wife; but this the Visigoth monarch refused to comply with until his proposed son-in-law had dismissed his other wives and mistresses, and consented to recognise Galswinthe alone as his queen. The marriage took place in the year 567; and about the same time Caribert dying, his realm

was divided among his brothers, when Limoges, Cahors and Bordeaux were assigned to Chilperic; besides which he obtained several districts at the foot of the Pyrenees, as the *morgengab* (morning gift), or nuptial present of Galswinthe.

Frédégonde, however, though repudiated had not quitted the palace, and still retained considerable hold on the attachment of the weak-minded king. The consequence was that Galswinthe by degrees became distasteful to her husband, and finding that she had lost all consideration among the courtiers over whom Frédégonde resumed her sway, she sued to be permitted to return to her parents, whom she had not quitted at first without apprehension from the known violence and unscrupulousness of the Frankish character. Had Chilperic complied with this demand he must have relinquished the rich dowry of the princess, a sacrifice to which neither his pride nor avarice would consent. He endeavoured therefore to soothe and console his bride by gentle words and promises, and, when these failed, he gave directions for disposing of her to a slave, who took charge of her chamber one night, and



“on the morrow she was found dead on her bed.” The king assumed the outward signs of mourning for a few days, at the end of which he dried his tears, and was married to Frédégonde [568].

No sooner had Brunehaut heard and investigated the rumours that arose concerning the death of her sister than she solicited her husband Sigebert to avenge the murder, and he and Gontran shortly took arms for that purpose, chased Chilperic from his capital, and compelled him to fly for protection to Burgundy, the inhabitants of which, in the general confusion, had proclaimed

their independence and elected a king. The war was not of long continuance. Chilperic, on formally renouncing his pretensions to the dowry of Galswinthe, which had been the cause of his crime, and confirming its possession to Brunehaut her sister, was permitted to return to his kingdom.

It was shortly after this [570] that the invasion of the Saxons and Lombards, previously referred to, took place, when Sigebert, returned from the second invasion of the Abares, and resolving to profit from the embarrassments of Gontran, seized the important city of Arles and annexed it to his own dominion; while Chilperic, believing Sigebert occupied with the Burgundians, advanced with his forces into the Austrasian provinces of the Loire, and ravaged them in the spirit of a true barbarian. Celsus, the Burgundian patrician, effected a diversion meanwhile upon Avignon, and defeated Sigebert under the walls of Arles. The Austrasian, Gontran, then made peace with his brother, and they agreed to restore the several places they had taken from each other during the contest. Chilperic was next made to feel the enormity of his treachery. The vigilant Mummol was sent against him, and he attacked and defeated Prince Clovis, Chilperic's son, recaptured the cities of Tours and Poitiers, and recovered all that the King of Soissons had won. The latter however was only humbled for the moment. In 573 he returned to the charge, and having sent his son Theodebert, notwithstanding the oath he had taken at Pontyon, into Touraine and Limousin, Sigebert, in rage and despair, summoned to his standard the tribes which acknowledged his authority beyond the Rhine—the Thuringians, Saxons, Bavarians, Allemanni and Suevi, and with these—an army of barbarians, as ruthless as any who had yet troubled the repose of Europe—he marched against his brother. Gontran now united his forces with those of Chilperic, not so much to oppose the King of Austrasia, as to repel the hordes which had been introduced into France; but, when his own dominions were threatened, he renounced his alliance, assisted the Germans to pass the Seine, and hastened the defeat of the Neustrians. Chilperic was driven back to the gates of Chartres, where he sued for and obtained peace, on condition of recalling his son Theodebert from Touraine.

The settlement of their quarrels among the brothers, however, did not prevent the inhabitants from experiencing the miseries and licence of war. The barbarians whom Sigebert had incorporated with his army would not forego the plunder which had been promised them, and, regardless of treaties, they spread themselves in bands on all sides, and ravaged the whole country. It was in vain that Sigebert endeavoured to restrain them, in some instances at the hazard of his life; in vain that some of their leaders were seized as mutineers, and stoned to death in presence of their comrades: nothing but plunder and destruction could satisfy auxiliaries, who regarded war merely as a source of profit and pleasure. They pillaged and burned the towns and villages around Paris [574], and took with them on their return to Germany an immense crowd of prisoners, upon whom they placed heavy ransoms as the



price of their deliverance from slavery. The state of the people—the occupiers and cultivators of the land, the manufacturers and the merchants—meanwhile, was miserable beyond description. The fruits of their labour, and the produce of their capital and skill were destroyed or carried away, and to the violence of man were added the horrors of famine, and its invariable concomitant—disease.

But, notwithstanding the sharp experience of these things by the Franks, the barbarians had scarcely been withdrawn into their own country twelve months when they were recalled by Sigebert to renew their devastations. Chilperic and Gontran, brooding over the humiliation inflicted upon them, had once more coalesced against their brother; and Prince Theodebert was again sent by his father to take possession of Touraine. This was a war of vengeance. Chilperic traversed Champagne, carrying fire and sword—words of terrible import in allusion to those days—as far as the gates of Rheims, while Gontran, more timid, urged, on a small scale, the same kind of work nearer home. Sigebert awaited only the advance of his German allies to avenge the atrocities to which his people had been subjected, by still more atrocious outrages, and denounced extermination against all who offered resistance to his progress. The King of Orléans, alarmed, again laid down his arms at his brother's bidding; Theodebert was defeated and slain near Angoulême; and Chilperic, deprived of his son, abandoned by his ally, and but feebly supported by his vassals, fled to Tournay and solicited peace and pardon. Sigebert performed a triumphal march through the realm of Neustria, and Brunehaut his wife hastened with her three children to Paris to assist at the rejoicings with which the Franks were wont to celebrate their victories, and to throw her influence into the scale against extending mercy to the murderer of her sister Galswinthe.

The fate of Chilperic appeared to be decided. St. Germain, then bishop of Paris, vainly wrote to Brunehaut, endeavouring to appease her resentment, and even went in person to the Austrasian camp and implored the king to remember the ties which bound him to his brother. Sigebert would listen to nothing but words of hate and vengeance; and after denouncing death against

Chilperic, he caused himself to be proclaimed King of Soissons. The Neustrian land-owners and husbandmen did homage to their new monarch wherever he appeared. The towns opened their gates to his emissaries, and the soldiers elevated him on their shields, and carried him through the camp amid general acclamations. Chilperic was effectually deposed; when the genius of Frédégonde interposed to save him from utter destruction. She engaged two young men of Théroutanne to undertake the assassination of Sigebert, and they, gaining access to the king's presence in the midst of his army, under pretence of having business of importance to communicate, struck him at the same moment with their long daggers, called by the Franks *sera-masaxes*, and put a period to his reign and his revenge. He uttered one



piercing cry as he fell to the earth, and expired on the spot [575]. Frédégonde, in order to make doubly sure of the accomplishment of her purpose, had caused the daggers of her agents to be poisoned.

The power of Sigebert did not outlive its creator. It was to the person of the prince that the Franks formed their attachment and rendered their allegiance. In comparison with the prowess and renown of a distinguished warrior, law, and hereditary or other rights, were of little estimation; and the private virtues or vices of a chief, so long as they did not interfere with the rude freedom of the military, were regarded with perfect indifference. As soon as the King of Austrasia was dead, the Neustrians renewed their fealty to Chilperic, and the Austrasian army disbanded. Frédégonde, whose hatred to Brunehaut had been increased by the momentary triumph of the latter, despatched instant orders to Paris to seize the queen and her children, and this having been effected, Chilperic was proclaimed King of Austrasia, as Sigebert had formerly been of Soissons. In the midst of the confusion that followed, Gondebaud, one of the *leudes* of Metz—a class of freemen so called (*leud*—illiterate), to distinguish them from the learned or ecclesiastical nobles; and who, as composing the national assembly, held in their hands the chief power of the State—contrived to liberate Childebert, the eldest son of Sigebert, by lowering him in a sack from one of the windows of his prison, which was situated on the ramparts, and hastening with him to his father's capital, he caused him, on Christmas-day, to be produced to the citizens, and saluted by them as king. This was a bold step, and led to important consequences. Childebert was a mere child, and required to be governed and protected by able ministers. The Austrasians, therefore, appointed a *Mayor of the Palace*, who, in the king's name, was empowered to perform the functions of royalty, and who, in the end, by establishing a perpetual guardianship over the long-haired princes, reduced the authority of the sovereign to perfect insignificance. This was the commencement of the reign of the *Rois fainéants*, or *sluggards*, the subsequent subversion of whose nominal dominion put an end to the Merovingian dynasty.

The widowed Queen Brunehaut, meanwhile, banished to Rouen, lived there in continual apprehension of the sinister designs of her mortal enemy. But before she had been long a prisoner, she was visited by Meroveus, one of the sons of Chilperic and Audovère, the former mistress of Frédégonde. The prince had been sent by his father to complete the conquest of the provinces bordering on the Loire, which, amid the constant wars of the period, had so frequently changed their governors; and, being thus partially freed from restraint, he seized the opportunity of making a conquest for himself. He had seen and been captivated by the beauty of Brunehaut at Paris, and he now sought her hand in marriage. Under pretence of paying a visit to his mother, who since her repudiation had retired to a convent at Mans, he went at Easter, in the year 576, to Rouen, paid his court, and was accepted by the fair Visigoth, who hoped through her marriage to obtain a means of avenging herself upon Frédégonde. Her object was defeated through want of precaution in the celebration of her nuptials; which were not so secret but that the news was immediately carried to Soissons, whence Chilperic, who regarded

the alliance as an act of rebellion in his son, hastened with a number of armed followers to Rouen, surprised the bride and bridegroom, tore the latter from the arms of his seducer, and sent him back under a strong escort to Soissons, while Brunehaut, who it was reasonably supposed would embrace the opportunity of flying to the court of her father, and thus severing her connexion with Merovæus, was set at liberty.

Brunehaut, however, instead of taking the road to Spain, hastened to Metz, and endeavoured to wrest from the Mayor of the Palace the guardianship of the young king her son. Many of the Austrasians declared in favour of her regency, but the leudes generally supported the chief of their election, and a struggle ensued, in which the queen was obliged to yield; when, dissembling her chagrin, she united her followers with their opponents, in order to resist a threatened invasion of the kingdom by Chilperic, who, burning with rage and disappointment, had declared implacable warfare against Brunehaut and Childebert. By the exhortations and energy of the queen, the Austrasians were roused to advance into the territory of the foe, and to carry the war even to the gates of Soissons, where, however, they failed to accomplish her desire in capturing Frédégonde and Prince Clovis. The whole Neustrian Court had taken flight, with the exception of Merovæus, who, by remaining fell a willing captive into the hands of his beloved Brunehaut, whose affection for him, however, was not of a kind to interfere with her thirst for vengeance against his father. Mummol, who commanded the Austrasians, gave chase to Chilperic, and after defeating him, and slaying twenty-thousand of his adherents near Limoges, imposed upon him humiliating terms of peace. The disappointed fury of the King of Soissons now fell upon his disobedient son. Merovæus was thrown into prison, his long hair—the mark of his royal birth—was indignantly cut off, he was formally divorced from Brunehaut, ordained as priest, arrayed in canonicals, and sent under guard to the abbey of St. Calais in Maine.

The unfortunate prince did not reach his destination. On the borders of Maine he contrived to escape from his escort, and, reaching Tours undiscovered, gained the church of St. Martin at the moment high-mass was being chanted by the clergy. His person while there was inviolable. The Franks, unscrupulous as they were with regard to infractions of the divine law, were sufficiently superstitious to fear the anathemas of the clergy, and generally agreed to respect, in appearance at least, the sanctuaries which had been created as a refuge for persons pursued by the lawless myrmidons of power. Chilperic would not openly invade the cloister, but he demanded from the bishop, the good old Gregory of Tours, the delivery of the refugee, and on meeting with a refusal, contested the right of the church to withhold criminals from justice, and appealed for a decision on the subject to St. Martin himself. He wrote a letter to the dead saint, and deposited it with the necessary writing materials for obtaining an answer on the martyr's tomb. No reply however was returned. Too honest and simple-minded to practise the usual chicanery of

such occasions, Gregory was content to rely on his own influence over the King and the Franks, and to abide the issue without enforcing his claims by the aid of a miracle. There was a gleam of reason and truth still existing amid the besotting darkness of an age of almost universal ignorance and falsehood.

Merovæus, like his father, resorted to supernatural agency for council and assistance. He consulted a celebrated magician, who had predicted, according to contemporary accounts, the year, the day, and even the hour of the death of Caribert, King of Paris. This personage informed the prince that, in the course of twelve months, Chilperic would be in his tomb, Merovæus on the throne of Soissons, and his brothers in prison. After narrowly escaping capture on two or three occasions, and assassination on others, by the agents of his father, or rather his mother-in-law, the young man eluded the vigilance of his pursuers, and quitting his solitude fled to Metz. He was received with demonstrations of joy by Brunehaut; but hatred for the family of Chilperic was too deeply implanted in the bosoms of the Austrasians to permit them to share the transports of the Queen Mother. They compelled her to dismiss her husband, and ordered him to depart the realm; when lingering about Rheims, he received a deputation from the inhabitants of Thérouanne, entreating him to hasten to their city and to place himself as prince at their head, assuring him that the whole country was ready to take arms in his cause. This was a plot devised by Frédégonde to get Merovæus into her power; and the prince, influenced perhaps by the prophecy of the astrologer of Tours, fell into the snare. On his road to Thérouanne he was arrested in an isolated country-house where he had sought shelter, and those who pretended to have been sent to conduct him to a throne became his gaolers. Chilperic, informed of his capture, took horse and went to see him; but Queen Frédégonde had already taken the necessary precautions to prevent a reconciliation between father and son. When the king arrived he found Merovæus dead, his body having been pierced through with a sword.

The hatred of Frédégonde towards Brunehaut was not even yet appeased. Pretextat, bishop of Rouen, sponsor of Merovæus, and officiating priest at his nuptials, was brought before a council, accused of high treason. Chilperic desired that he might be publicly stripped of his clerical vestments and excommunicated for ever; but this extreme punishment was thought to exceed the offence, and was not awarded. The bishop was merely condemned to perpetual imprisonment—a sentence which was subsequently commuted into banishment to the Isle of Jersey, whence, some years later, when Chilperic was dead, Pretextat returned to his diocese and resumed his episcopal functions. The dark and perturbed spirit of Frédégonde, however, had not slumbered, nor had the fury of her heart been abated by years and vicissitudes. Whom she had once regarded as an enemy she pursued remorselessly till death; and, unlike the generality of those whose over-excited temperaments have prompted them to crime, she was even incapable of forming permanent

attachments:—her love might by a word be turned into the deadliest hatred. In this case, she had not forgotten nor forgiven the bishop of Rouen. Accordingly, soon after his return from exile, while he was chanting mass one day in his cathedral, in the midst of a large congregation, an assassin, gliding through the crowd, made his way to the steps of the altar, and struck him in the right breast with a dagger. The murder was wrought openly, the perpetrator was publicly seen and recognised; but such was the surprise, the prostration, or the indifference of the people, that not a hand was raised to prevent the escape of the culprit, not a devotee stirred to succour the wounded priest, who fell at the foot of the altar, staining the pavement with his welling blood. It was regarded but as one of the murders with which the times were rife. The people, grown familiar with violence and bloodshed, had begun to look upon the most heinous crimes without awe, and as a means of redressing wrongs, which the tribunals were too feeble to repress or to punish.

In the year 580, Frédégonde, having lost her three sons by successive attacks of dysentery, and being maddened by the thought that Clovis, the son of Audovère, would inherit his father's crown, accused that prince, in concert with a female attendant belonging to the palace, with whom he was in love, of having occasioned the death of his young brothers by poison. Chilperic, still the tool of his ambitious and crafty wife, believed or affected to believe her in all things. Orders were accordingly issued for the seizure of Clovis, who was arrested, and three days afterwards poniarded, at the castle of Noisy. Even the sister of the youth was an object of suspicion or detestation, and after the assassination of the prince she was sent to a convent and forced to take the veil; while Audovère herself, after the ruin of her family, the members of which had one by one perished at the instigation of the ungrateful woman who owed to her the exaltation she had attained, fell in turn a victim [581] to the relentless wrath which swept from the path of the reigning queen all who could possibly be deemed objects of jealousy. It is not for light causes that the name of Frédégonde has passed into a term of reproach towards women who have lived, revelled, and been actors amid scenes of slaughter and of lust.

While these events transpired in Neustria, Childebert, son of Sigebert, was approaching manhood. In 577, Gontran, who had lost his own two sons in youth, adopted his nephew and declared himself Protector of Austrasia. By this strong alliance Chilperic was for a time restrained from aggression upon his kinsmen, whose territories hemmed him in on three sides, and whose forces were much more than a match for any that he could bring into the field. He was nevertheless too fond of war to relinquish it while an equal enemy could be found, and he therefore sought a quarrel with Varoc, King of Britany, who, nothing loth, put his troops in motion and speedily overran Poitou; while the Gascons, whom he had oppressed, rose in insurrection, defeated his army near Béarn, and compelled it to make a precipitate retreat. Had it not been for the native inconstancy of Gontran, and the turbulence of the Austrasians,



Assassination of Bishop Pretextat.

who desired that their monarchy should be independent of the neighbouring realms, in its laws, government, and royal family, the throne of Chilperic would then, in all probability, have been overturned. The disunion of his brother and nephew saved him from destruction. Gontran, who on the adoption of Childebert had ceded to him a moiety of the government and revenue of Marseilles, on some petty dispute had suddenly resumed his gift, and this had induced the Austrasian king to enter into alliance with Chilperic, his ancient enemy, and to join him in a sanguinary attack on the realm of Orléans. The war was maintained for some time with the utmost fury; but, save the ravage and desolation by which its progress was marked, it appears to have been entirely without result. Massacre, pillage, and unbridled licence might, without exaggeration, be set down as the objects as well as the concomitants of the struggle; and so little was anything else regarded, that the soldiers are recorded not unfrequently to have plundered their own kinsmen and friends rather than return from the strife empty-handed. Chilperic signalised his prowess in the contest by killing with his own hand the Count of Rouen, who, passing from Bourges to return to the seat of his own government, had burned and destroyed everything in his way. The treaty of peace which at length put an end to hostilities gave to the Neustrians several places in the south of France, which had formerly interfered with the compactness of Chilperic's domains in that quarter.

All things now seemed to prosper with the husband of Frédégonde. The peace with his relatives was succeeded in 583, by the birth of a son (Clotaire II.), in whom the then extinct posterity of Chilperic was renewed. At the same time Ricarède, King of the Visigoths, who had long sued for the hand of the Princess Rigunthe, was made happy in possession of his bride, and dismissed with rich presents to Spain. The King of Soissons thus obtained an interval of repose; and even Frédégonde, occupied with maternal cares—the only affections of her heart which remained pure and disinterested—ceased for awhile to contrive mischiefs. Hers, however, were but brief intervals of idleness. Her reckless and ungovernable passions soon involved her once more in a vortex of crime.

Chilperic went to pass the hunting season at the small country-town of Chelles on the Marne, where the Frankish kings had a palace. On his return one evening from the chase, he had just dismounted from his horse, and had his hand still resting on the shoulder of an attendant, when a strange man suddenly sprung upon him and despatched him with two or three well-aimed strokes of a dagger. He fell instantly to the earth, the blood gushed in streams from the wounds, and from his mouth, and ere he could be borne to his apartment, he was a corpse. The '*Gestes des Rois Francs*,' has supplied the prelude to this tragedy. Before quitting the palace in the morning, the king, unperceived and noiselessly, had entered the chamber of Frédégonde while engaged in washing her hands. In order to surprise her he had struck her good-humouredly with the riding-wand which he carried in his hand;

and the queen, believing the intruder to be a lover, named Landry, in whose society she indemnified herself for the frequent absence of Chilperic, returned an answer which betrayed her amour. The king said nothing; but from his silence it was clear that he comprehended what had been unwittingly



addressed to him. Frédégonde turned and perceived her mistake, and Chilperic withdrew from her presence to fall a victim to her fears.

This romantic story has been disputed by antiquaries; but it has at least the support of local tradition, which in such a matter, and relating to such a period, is as good authority as any that can be cited. At the entrance to Chelles, going from Paris, in a meadow adjoining the road, a short distance from the ancient abbey, an old square stone, surmounted by a small time-eaten column, is still standing, to attest the veracity of the legend. The peasants of the neighbourhood point it out to the wayfarer, and tell him that a King of France was there assassinated by his wife, in those remote times when the rich pasture grounds with which the town is surrounded formed part of a vast forest where the boar and the stag had their customary haunts, and in which the wild bull was indigenous. The records of a thousand years later are scarcely more circumstantial or better authenticated.

But, howsoever Chilperic came by his death, it is certain that the event itself was a signal for the general desertion of his followers, as had been the case on the demise of Sigebert. The courtiers instantly departed from Chelles, and while some retired to their own estates, to watch and take advantage of the course of events, others put themselves at once into communication with either the King of Austrasia or of Orléans, in order to assist in guiding the car of fortune, and not a few took arms in behalf of a pretender, whose adventures will be presently noticed. None remained with the body of the

dead king, except Malulfe, bishop of Senlis, who three days before had vainly sought to obtain admission to the living monarch's presence. To this forbearing and truly Christian priest was left the sole care of the royal funeral. He caused the corpse to be placed by his clerks on board a boat in the Marne, and conveyed to Paris, where it was buried with becoming pomp and ceremony in the church of St. Vincent—St. Germain-des-Près—Anno 584.

Frédégonde reached Paris about the time that her husband was buried, and seeing the defection of the great vassals, she at once took sanctuary in the cathedral, with her young son, Prince Clotaire, and all the money and jewels she was able to collect. The rest of the public treasures were delivered, without scruple, by those to whose charge they had been confided, to King Childebart, who being at Meaux when he heard of his uncle's death, had sent trusty emissaries to Paris, in hopes of their finding an opportunity of turning the occasion to his account. The position of the rival queens, Brunehaut and Frédégonde, was now reversed, and the latter trembled the more at reflecting on the probable vengeance which would be exacted, from knowledge of the course she would herself have pursued in similar circumstances. She had too much left, however, of the she-wolf's spirit which had actuated her through life, to sit down and despair. Her fears were pointed to the Austrasians. A ray of hope lingered on the side of the Orléannois. She exerted all her talents and address to win the confidence and friendship of Gontran, and thus to defeat the designs formed by her enemy for her ruin. Her letter to the fickle-minded sovereign of Orléans, "moistened with her tears," expressed her earnest desire "to entrust to his hands the government of a realm which no longer had a master, and the care of a young prince of four months old, whom his mother dared not confide to others." The appeal was made to a childless father, to one who, from his protection of Childebart, seems, whatever were his other faults and vices, always to have regarded with tenderness the helplessness of childhood; and the prayer was not in vain. He accepted the guardianship consigned to him, and hastened to Paris to defend the orphan king against the ambition and rage of Brunehaut and her son, and arrived there barely in time to render the service he had promised. As he entered, with a band of faithful followers at one gate, Childebart presented himself at the other. Fortunately Frédégonde had taken the precaution previously to gain the affections, by gold and good words, of the Parisians; and they consequently closed every means of access against the Austrasians, while Gontran found ready admittance and a welcome from all classes. Childebart endeavoured to cajole and amuse the old man. He called him his father, reminded him of the scene of the adoption, spoke of the glories of their old alliance, and besought him not to interpose between the just wrath of an injured king, and the detested son of Queen Frédégonde. The reply of Gontran was firm, dignified, and worthy of better times and a better man. "Shew me," he said, "any treaty signed with my hand, in which I have consented to assist in overturning the throne of a kinsman, in order to profit

by the partition of his dominions." The demand was as appropriate as it was severe. Such a treaty as that alluded to was in existence, executed by Childebert and Chilperic; and Frédégonde had transmitted it to the protector of her son, to shew the spirit by which the King of Austrasia was actuated. Childebert, enraged at this disclosure of his treachery, at once forgot the adoption to which a few days before he had affectionately referred, and indulged in loud threatenings against his uncle, towards whom he vowed a mortal enmity. One of his messengers to Gontran so far forgot the respect due to the old king as to tell him that "the steel was not blunted with which his brothers had been slain." This fury, however, led to no result at the time. The troubles which were then gathering, and which shortly afterwards burst forth in the South, came at that moment to occupy the undivided attention of both parties.

In order rightly to understand the nature of these events, it is necessary to revert to some preliminary proceedings connected with the History of the Merovingian princes. During the reign of the sons of Clovis, a woman gained access one day to the court of the King of Paris, and holding an infant in her arms, declared that it was a child of Clotaire I., and implored Childebert to acknowledge it as his nephew. The king took charge of him, and gave him the name of Gondovald; but he subsequently sent him to Clotaire, who denied the parentage, and caused his long hair, which his mother had trained to fall on his shoulders, like that of the princes of the royal line, to be cut off. At a later period Caribert would have afforded shelter to the pretender, deeming, perhaps, that he might become an useful political instrument, but Sigebert opposing himself to such an expedient, Gondovald was again shorn of his princely ringlets, and banished to Cologne, where he earned a subsistence by painting pictures and ornaments for the apartments of the wealthy. At length, weary of that life, and disgusted with the scornful jests of the Franks, who had given him the surname of Ballomez; meaning, in the language of the ancient Gauls, 'mock prince,' he secretly quitted the place of his exile, and, proceeding to Italy, engaged in the service of the eunuch Narses, who conferred on him a wealthy Greek lady in marriage, in order to attach him to the service of the Emperor. For some time afterwards he lived in perfect tranquillity at Constantinople; but being seen by some Austrasian leudes, sent as ambassadors to the Emperor Maurice, in 579, he was induced by them to resume his ambitious views, and to enter into a conspiracy for asserting his claim to the crown of Soissons, the inheritance of his pretended father. To favour this project a powerful faction was formed in Austrasia among the leudes, who sent Gontran Bosan, one of their number, to Constantinople to fetch Gondovald to France.

On landing, in 582, the pretender was received with royal honours by Theodore, bishop of Marseilles; and he had soon the satisfaction of being joined by Mummol, the most distinguished living Frank warrior, and several others of the noblest and bravest in the land. Every thing hitherto had

proceeded prosperously. Leudes and vassals daily thronged to the invader's standard, and freeman and serf, panting for a change of rulers and of government, wished success to him who came among them with high promises, and who had not as yet rendered himself notorious by breach of faith. Treachery however had already crept into their ranks. Gontran Bosan, having seen the immense treasures which Gondovald had brought with him from the East, desired to gain a larger share than he could reasonably expect for his services. To obtain this, he put himself into communication with the King of Orléans, and immediately afterwards deserted the companions with whom he had embarked. At Avignon Mummol found him at the head of a hostile army drawn up to oppose the advance of the insurgents. He was repulsed with little difficulty however [583], and the insurrection went forward with undiminished vigour.

It was shortly after these events that news was received of the death of Chilperic. This gave a strong accession of adherents to the partisans of Gondovald, in those Franks who deserted the corpse of the dead king to seek a new leader. Among others Duke Didier, who on the approach of the insurgents had withdrawn from his government of Toulouse into the Albigeois with his *fideles*, or free followers, now returned and joined Mummol at Avignon. The affair had already assumed the aspect of a revolution, and Gontran and Childebert, laying aside their resentments, prepared to act on the impulse of their fears. Mummol and Didier meanwhile paused to reduce Aquitaine to submission. This large division of France had never hitherto been effectually conquered by the Franks. Clovis had merely succeeded in making through it a triumphal march, and his successors had been known only by their occasional ravages and plunder of the inhabitants. The name and laws of the Catholic Franks were hateful to the Provincial Arians, who, whenever they found an opportunity, had not failed to avenge the injuries inflicted upon them on the persons of their oppressors. Revolt and massacre were of frequent occurrence; and there constantly existed that sturdy and menacing ill-will which marks the intercourse of unwilling slaves with an ungracious master. At the last outbreak of the Aquitanians, towards the close of the reign of Chilperic, in 579, the inhabitants of Limoges, excited by the enormity of the burdens imposed on them, had set fire to the dwellings of the tax-gatherers, thrown into the flames the edicts of the king, and the books containing the registry of assessments, and torn in pieces Bishop Ferréol and Mark the Refendary. Men thus affected needed but a call from such as Mummol and his colleagues to take arms in behalf of whosoever should seem to possess the means of emancipating them from the thrall they were enduring. Accordingly the Southern provinces not only suffered without resistance, but assisted in, the proclamation through all their cities and towns of Gondovald, the pretended son of Clotaire, as King of Aquitaine; and the event was celebrated as marking the commencement of an era of freedom and justice.

The inauguration of the new king took place at Brives-la-Gaillarde, a small municipal town on the banks of the Corrèze, in December 584. In conformity with the custom of the Franks he was raised on a shield in the midst of his soldiers, and carried three times around the camp, that he might be seen and recognised by all present. At the third tour, Gondovald lost his equilibrium, and had it not been for the crowd with which he was surrounded, the sovereign would have fallen to the earth. The omen was unfortunate. The superstitious and but half christianised Franks looked more sometimes to signs than to reason, and the hesitation imparted to them in action by an unfavourable augury, was calculated to assist materially in diminishing the chances of success for an enterprise thus ushered in. From the moment when the foot of Gondovald became unsteady on his buckler, many of his followers regarded his cause as desperate.

Without losing time, however, Mummol and Didier obtained the formal recognition of the authority of their king by nearly all the native authorities of the South. In Angoulême, Saintes, and Poitiers, the inhabitants themselves expelled the officers and adherents of the "legitimate" sovereigns, and hoisted the standard of the Liberator. From all parts of the country adventurers flocked in to take part in the expedition, which, it was hoped, would give to France a new race of monarchs; a proof at least that the government of the Frank kings was generally unpopular, and that the people were not so indifferent to the rule under which they lived as has been sometimes represented. The town of Périgueux, in Dordogne, and Toulouse, alone hesitated to declare in favour of Gondovald, and these rather from timidity, it may be presumed, and at the instigation of individuals than from public dislike. At Toulouse, Bishop Magnulfe closed the gates of the city against the advancing army of Mummol; but at the first demonstration of assault, the inhabitants gave free ingress to the troops. Magnulfe himself was obstinately opposed to the new king, and had not sufficient policy to conceal his aversion, even when in the power of men whom there was as little necessity as common sense to bring upon him as adversaries. A few days after the capture of the place, the bishop had the temerity, at a banquet to which he had been invited, to dispute with Gondovald himself his pretended regal birth, and was struck in the face by Mummol for his presumption. The prelate lodged a complaint on the subject with Didier, the governor, who having heard the case, not only decided against the churchman, but inflicted on him corporeal chastisement with his own hands, and sent him, bound with cords, into exile. In addition to these indignities, Magnulfe's property was confiscated, and his bishopric conferred on another—on Saggitarius, the warlike bishop, who had taken part in the battle of Embrun, and who now, with several other church dignitaries, bore arms among the insurgent Franks and Visigoths.

The bishop of Bordeaux, intimidated probably by the treatment of him of Toulouse, received Gondovald with every mark of rejoicing and loyalty, and

the city became for a time the Aquitanian capital. Here the army passed the winter, and prepared, with the first sunshine of spring, to push its conquests beyond the Loire, and, by a single campaign, to finish the contest. The generals, however, had miscalculated their own forces, and relied somewhat too implicitly upon the supineness of their adversaries. Before the pretender was ready to quit Bordeaux, a Burgundian army, commanded by Leudégésile and Aghilan, had appeared under the walls of Poitiers, and laid siege to the city, which after a brief, but courageous resistance, was compelled to surrender. The inhabitants were punished with all the tortures the fierce captors could devise, and the pillage was carried to such minute excess, that the bishop was obliged to break in pieces a chalice belonging to the service of the altar, in order to distribute its fragments among the sacrilegious soldiery.



The fortune of Gondovald from this moment began to wane, and the alliance between Childebert and Gontran, which immediately followed the taking of Poitiers, rendered his cause hopeless. He had placed some reliance, indeed, on the support of the King of Austrasia, whose officers and agents had favoured his enterprise, and led him to direct his chief efforts against the dominions of Gontran and Clotaire II., and besides, the Austrasian and his uncle were at open feud, not alone on account of the inheritance of Chilperic, but respecting several towns and districts of Aquitaine, which Gontran had unjustly appropriated to himself during the childhood of Childebert. The settlement of a quarrel, so complicated in its details, might have been a

matter of greater difficulty and of longer negotiation than it proved, had not both the contending parties perceived, from the progress of Gondovald, that it would be better for each to obtain portion of the disputed territories, than to leave the whole to an impostor. The first intelligence which publicly transpired, of the renewed amity between Gontran and his nephew, was the seizure by the latter of two of Gondovald's emissaries, who, being put to the torture, were compelled to disclose the names of all the persons engaged in the rebellion, together with their plans and operations. The council of regency, under whose direction the young king had hitherto acted, being found implicated, was dismissed, and another chosen from among the leudes who were less obnoxious to Gontran; and the reconciliation between the two kings was finally celebrated by a banquet which lasted three days—one of those rude and intemperate feasts at which special distinction and applause were to be won by the consumption of an extraordinary quantity of food and intoxicating liquors. An Austrasian force was forthwith sent to strengthen the camp at Poitiers, and to arrest the march of the Aquitanians, who were just entering Dordogne.

The unexpected alliance of the Frankish Kings disturbed all the designs of Gondovald's adherents. Terror soon spread among soldiers and chiefs, and dissensions followed, both in the camp and the council. Didier, Duke of Toulouse, with his vassals, deserted the puppet-monarch, who thenceforth, unable to maintain himself in the open country, was compelled to seek refuge within the strong fortress of Couvennes, now called Comminges. The town had been built by Pompey on the summit of a steep mountain. Its high and broad walls, constructed, in the usual manner of the Romans, on the slope of the hill, and flanked at intervals with large towers, rendered the place impregnable. The Garonne, rolling along its rocky bed, roared through the adjacent valley; and a fountain of living water, gushing forth within the fortifications at the foot of the steep, set the besieged at ease against any attempt to reduce them by thirst. The spot where this spring issued from the rock had been enclosed, for protection against treachery, within a strong tower, whence it flowed through subterranean conduits into the town. Mummol and Gondovald were received with ardour by the people of Couvennes, who at once prepared to sustain a siege in their defence. Their devotion, however, was but ill requited. Mummol caused announcement to be made that the enemy had arrived in the neighbouring plain, and the inhabitants, instantly taking arms, went forth to dislodge them. On returning from their fruitless march they found the gates of the town shut against them, and learned that they had been betrayed by their pretended friends, who had expelled them from their homes, and appropriated to themselves all the provisions, the warlike and other stores, the wealth and the females, within the fortress; and to heighten their misery, the surrounding plains, which they had scarcely quitted, began to whiten with the tents of the hostile Burgundians.

Thus freed from the superfluous mouths of his adherents, Mummol

regarded the approach of the foe with indifference; and, independently of the strength of his position, he had some reason to congratulate himself on the unexpected aid of the population of the neighbouring country, who, notwithstanding the perfidy shewn to the inhabitants of Couvennes, still preserved unshaken their fidelity to Gondovald. The efforts of these auxiliaries alone were sufficient, for some days, to overawe the Burgundians, who scarcely dared to venture beyond their entrenchments, and few of those who did so returned to their comrades. At last, however, the operations of the besiegers commenced; and during five successive days they vainly endeavoured to get near in order to assault the walls of the town. Men and machines were alike crushed beneath masses of rock, rolled down the mountain's sides, till the engineers pronounced the place impracticable. But what force failed to accomplish was easily effected by gold. A Burgundian emissary contrived to gain access to Mummol, and by large promises, and plausible representations, he won that general to desert his master—whose cause, it is hardly necessary to add, had already become desperate. The other chiefs who had taken arms in behalf of the son of Clotaire followed the example of their leader, and in a general council advised Gondovald to submit to his fate. "Go forth from this town," they said, "and present thyself to thy brother. We will come to speak with his officers. There is no danger that thou wilt be sacrificed; for there remain scarcely any of thy race."

The unfortunate king was at no loss to understand from this that he had been betrayed; but knowing also that it would be useless to contest the matter, he suffered himself to be conducted in silent sadness to one of the gates of the town, where Ollon, Count of Burgundy, and Gontran Bosan, his former friend, were in waiting to receive him. As soon as they had delivered up their victim, Mummol and his companions hastily retraced their steps, closed the gates behind them, and abandoned the prince to the mercy of his enemies. The end scarcely needs relating. Gondovald, as he descended the rugged path towards the Burgundian camp, was struck from behind by Count Ollon, who felling him to the earth, exclaimed to his companions, "Behold your Ballomez, the son and brother of kings." In a moment he was pierced with a lance thrust into his side below his cuirass. He endeavoured to rise, but Gontran Bosan, who was above him, seizing a large stone hurled it upon his head and crushed him to death. His body was dragged by a rope through the camp, his hair and beard were plucked out, and at last his mangled and bloody carcase was left in the midst of the plain, to be devoured by wild beasts and birds of prey.

The chiefs who had contributed to this tragedy, first by tempting Gondovald from his peaceful home at Constantinople, and subsequently by their treachery, profited little from their crooked policy. They had promised to surrender the city next day, and believing that they were then to be at liberty to depart with their arms and spoil, they passed the interval in plundering the public buildings and the churches. At dawn, however, when the gates were opened,



they found that they were still regarded as enemies ; and the rather that their last labours had rendered them worth a contest. A fearful massacre ensued. Priests, soldiers, citizens, women, and children were indiscriminately put to the sword. Not a soul, who had abode in Couvennes during the siege, according to Gregory of Tours, escaped slaughter ; and, when living victims were no longer to be found, the town was set on fire, and the flames were watched and fed with demoniac perseverance till the place was utterly consumed, and reduced to a mass of blackened stones and naked rock. Mummol and his immediate friends, meanwhile, had been permitted to retire to the camp of the besiegers. The fate of their less dignified comrades awaited them. A command had been issued to slay all, and the execution of such congenial orders were not long delayed. Mummol himself fled for refuge to the tent of Leudégésile ; but that general, so far from affording him shelter, directed an immediate assault upon him ; and at length, after having maintained his ground for some time against a host, the old warrior fell at the entrance of the tent, transfixd with a spear, and bleeding from many wounds. Saggitarius, bishop

of Embrun and Toulouse, who had exhibited the utmost skill and courage during the siege, now sought for safety, disguised in the habit of a monk, in a neighbouring wood: but being overtaken, his head, together with the cowl which covered it, was struck off with the single blow of an axe, and retained by the Burgundians as a trophy. Those only of the insurgent chiefs, who, instead of going to Couvennes, had withdrawn to their estates, were permitted to escape the vengeance of Gontran and Childebert. Didier was pardoned; the episcopal comrades of Saggitarius, on professing their repentance, were absolved by an ecclesiastical council: and other matters of importance crowding rapidly upon the event, it was soon forgotten by the Franks, or remembered only as one of the ordinary incidents of the age. Upon the Aquitanians alone it made an indelible impression. It strengthened their hereditary hatred to their conquerors, and taught them, even amid failure what might be done by the few against many, where a patriotic purpose animated the hearts of those combined. The people reflected, and resolved to be free from the domination of their tyrants, and accordingly we shortly afterwards find notices of Aquitanian sovereigns independent of those of Neustria and Austrasia.

It is not superfluous to remark that, although the provinces which had constituted the kingdom of Gondovald appertained to the kingdom of Neustria, the war had been maintained in the name of Gontran, and that the names and authority of Frédégonde and her son had, as if intentionally, been wholly unnoticed. It has been asserted even, that, at the moment of Gondovald's overthrow, agents from Frédégonde had arrived at Couvennes to offer him an asylum at the court of the young Clotaire. But whether this be so or not, it is certain that thenceforward Gontran cooled in his friendship towards the widow of his brother, and gradually assumed an attitude which a slight occasion would have converted into hostility. In the first place he compelled her to submit the government to a council of regency, similar to that which the Austrasian leudes had imposed upon Brunehaut, during the minority of Childebert. Immediately afterwards he insisted on her quitting Paris, where he himself took up his temporary residence as protector of his nephew. Having withdrawn to the castle of Vaudreuil, about four leagues from Rouen, at the point where the Eure flows into the Seine, Frédégonde had to sustain a new mortification, in an inquisition as to the circumstances of her husband's death. She adroitly brought the evidence against herself to bear on the head of Duke Berulfe, Chilperic's ancient chamberlain; but, though by this means acquitted, she failed to remove the general suspicion of her guilt. About the same time, the body of Prince Chilperic, who had been put to death under the Queen's instructions at Noisy, was dragged from the Marne, into which it had been thrown, by a fisherman, who recognised it at once by its long hair as being that of a person of royal birth. Gontran, at the head of the clergy of Paris, went to see the corpse, and caused it to be borne in great pomp to the church of St. Vincent, where Chilperic himself lay buried. The body of Merovæus was next exhumed, and brought to Paris to be



interred beside that of his brother; and finally, Gontran, believing that he had sufficiently excited the popular indignation against Frédegunde, by renewing the memory of her blackest crimes, betrayed his ulterior purpose by disputing the legitimacy of his nephew. But this was dangerous ground. The Franks, however willing to punish Frédegunde, in her person or posterity, for her enormities, were not disposed to establish a precedent upon which their own widows and orphans might be subjected to ruin, whenever a crafty and powerful kinsman should desire their inheritance. They therefore contented themselves with the oath of Frédegunde, taken [585] in the presence of three bishops and of three hundred of the wealthiest Neustrian leudes, that she had never been false to the bed of Chilperic. The queen submitted to these humiliations with constancy and calmness, knowing that it was vain to argue without the power to act.

In the meantime, Brunehaut had gradually increased her power and influence in Austrasia. On every opportunity she had added a fraction to her authority, and at last on the death of Oendelin, chief minister to her son, she persuaded the young king, who had then attained the age of sixteen years, to dismiss his council of regency, and to invest her with the absolute administration of the kingdom. The leudes submitted. The government had long been virtually in her hands, had been wise and prudent, and the nation had prospered; and, as Childebert was approaching manhood, it was deemed better to yield till then than risk a civil war by resistance.

The first act of Brunehaut was to declare war against the Visigoths. This was in every way a popular measure; being calculated to gratify the Frankish love of fighting and of booty, to withdraw attention from the domestic affairs

of the nation, to subject the whole territory of ancient Gaul to the sway of the Franks, and to satisfy the rancour of sectarian hatred in a struggle with heretics. Brunehaut had also a personal quarrel to avenge. Her daughter Ingunde had wedded and converted to Catholicism Hermenegilde, son of the King of Spain, and for this she had been subjected to insult and outrage from the Arian clergy and nobility. The pretext set forth, however, was that, "It was a shame for the Franks to suffer the frontiers of the abominable Goths to extend so far into Gaul." Before the expedition, of which Gontran, King of Orléans, or, as he is frequently called by historians, King of Burgundy, assumed the command, set out for Septimania, two other wars sprung up with neighbouring nations—the Bretons and the Lombards; and the spirit which was manifested in the conduct of each at the commencement, seemed to indicate a return of that courage and skill for which the Franks had been distinguished under Clovis and his immediate successors. But the state of France was too unsettled, and the chiefs and people too turbulent to allow of any protracted effort being made at a distance from home.

The contest with the Visigoths opened with an attack by Gontran upon the Burgundians. The invading force was divided into three great bodies, representing the three Frankish realms. The army of Auvergne entered the hostile country by way of the Rouergue; but, though it took the first fortress it attacked, it was unable to obtain a single other triumph. The troops from the banks of the Loire ravaged all the open country of the enemy as far as Carcassone, which opened its gates to them almost without an attempt at defence; but a few days afterwards the inhabitants rose in a body against the victors, and expelled them with great slaughter from the city, doubtless, for some of those intolerable outrages by which their occupation of a subdued country was invariably marked. The Franks loitered beneath the walls of the place for some time, laying siege to, and endeavouring to retake it by assault and by stratagem; but the population were fully aroused to resistance, and all the attempts of the assailants proved futile. At last Tarentiole, Count of Limoges, who commanded this division, was killed by a stone from the engines on the walls, and his followers, disbanding, were for the most part caught in straggling parties, and put to death by the Visigoths, or by the Toulousans, subjects of Clotaire, whom they had plundered on their march, and through whose territory they now sought to pass on their return.

The troops of Gontran, which had attacked Nîmes, were scarcely more fortunate than those of Tarentiole; and, to add to the common misfortunes, the fleet sent by the old king to the coast of Galicia, was destroyed by that of the Spaniards. It was with difficulty that a few sailors of the expedition regained the shores of France; while Leuvigilde, King of the Visigoths, emboldened by success, hesitated not to carry the war into the country of the aggressors, and advanced with his army to the gates of Toulouse and Beaucaire. Gontran had miscalculated alike his own powers, and the opposition of his foe. Duke Didier, the betrayer of Gondevald, who had been again

entrusted with command, was surprised near Carcassone, and slain with a number of his followers in the conflict which followed; and Gontran Bosan some time afterwards perished with five thousand Franks at the same spot. Hostilities thenceforth slackened, and Gontran accepted terms of peace [589], which imposed on him the condition of relinquishing all attempts at conquering Septimania, while it left the grievances of Queen Brunehaut and her daughter entirely unredressed.

The Bretons, meanwhile, exhibited no less energy in defence of their soil than the Visigoths. The Franks were not only unable to obtain a footing on their territory, but were driven back far beyond the frontiers, with disgrace and loss, into their own land. The assailed, from being defenders became aggressors, and not content with ravaging the enemies' country upon the borders, made forays into the interior, and carried away much spoil and many prisoners. Every year, at the time of the vintage, their bands marched into Neustria, and despoiled the inhabitants of great part of their harvest. At first, they waited till after the wine had been made, and contented themselves with a share of the produce; but eventually, becoming familiar with the natives, they gathered the grapes themselves, used the wine-presses of the Franks, and quartered themselves on the population till everything was ready for their return. Gontran, as guardian of Clotaire, submitted to these humiliating inflictions till the year 590, when he put two large armies in motion to punish the aggressors. Ebrachaire and Beppolène marched upon Britany; but in consequence of some disagreement between them, Beppolène resolved alone to attack the army of Varoc, which was arrayed near the frontier in readiness to receive him. Guided by a Breton priest, the Frank general reached the encampment of the enemy, attacked him on the instant, and, after a long and well sustained battle, saw him abandon the field. For more than two days Varoc seemed fleeing before the face of the victors; but when, by this movement, he had enticed them into the midst of a morass, which was utterly impracticable to those unacquainted with its intricacies, he suddenly turned upon and drove them with irresistible fury into the marsh, where, according to Gregory of Tours, they were totally annihilated, though more "by the mud than the glaive." Ebrachaire afterwards entered into a negotiation with the enemy, and it was arranged that the Bretons, on the evacuation of their territory by the Franks, should thenceforth respect the Neustrian dominions. This treaty was observed only for a few days. When the invaders had reached the banks of the Ouh, a small river which empties itself into the sea between Vannes and the mouth of the Loire, they were suddenly attacked, during the confusion of crossing, by Cannao the son of Varoc; and those nearest the assailants were cut to pieces. A few, having already crossed the stream, escaped; the rest, comprising at least five sixths of the army, were left dead on the banks, or, leaping into the river, were borne onward by the waters, and engulfed, with all their baggage and arms, in the ocean.

Childebert, four years after this event, when he had added to his own the realm of his uncle Gontran, sent an army to avenge this act of treachery : with what success is uncertain. A great battle is recorded to have been fought, but Fredegarius, the narrator, has omitted to name the victors, though it was most probably the Bretons, who about that time added to their dominions several important towns, including Nantes, Vannes and Rennes,—which had previously obeyed Frank governors, and paid tribute to the Frank kings—and considerably extended their line of frontier; while for several years afterwards the Franks appear to have relinquished all designs upon the independence of their indomitable neighbours. It was this rude independence, indeed,—the stern refusal of the Bretons—worthy descendants of those free Celts who had struggled so long against the power of Imperial Rome—to pay homage, or to accept the laws or church-government of the Franks, which occasioned nearly all the quarrels in which the two races were from time to time involved.

Since the invasion of the Burgundian Provinces in 576, by the Lombards, the Franks had more than once sought to make reprisals, by entering Italy from the defiles of the Swiss and the Tyrolean Alps; but they had never been able to assume such an attitude of hostility as to call for serious exertions on the part of the Lombards to repel them; and after a few fruitless menaces, with the sack, perhaps, of an undefended or feeble town, they had generally returned empty-handed as they went. About the year 584, however, Maurice, Emperor of Constantinople, who wished to re-assert the sway of Justinian, entered into a treaty with Childebert, similar to that formerly concluded with Theodebert, to assist him to subduing the country once more to the condition of a Province of the Empire. The Austrasian, besides having his own quarrel with the Lombards to settle, was tempted by the Imperial gold, of which fifty thousand pieces were paid to him in advance for his co-operation. He promised all that was required; but, instead of fulfilling his engagement, imitated the example of Theodebert, and treated enemies and allies alike as his lawful prey; till both parties consented to pay more for his neutrality than he could reasonably have demanded for his active assistance. In 585, however, the Lombards having omitted to pay the required subsidy, were assailed by a large army of Franks and Allemanni; but, a bitter feeling of animosity having arisen between the chiefs and people of these two nations, they could not thenceforward be brought to act in concert, and the expedition failed. In 588, Childebert sent a new army across the Alps; but this was less fortunate than the first, being defeated by Autharis, the Lombard monarch; in a bloody battle—"with more loss and dishonour," it has been said, "than they had sustained since the foundation of their monarchy." Nevertheless they returned to the charge in 590, under the command of no less than twenty dukes, attended by the troops maintained in the several districts forming their respective government, and their free followers and inferior vassals. It will shew the character of these lawless bands to mention that the soldiers of

Wintrio, Duke of Champagne, ravaged, in their passage, the territory of Metz ; and that all the other troops did the same to the lands and towns through which they marched.

This was the most formidable of the Frank invasions since the time of Theodebert, and it was the last which the Merovingian princes made on Italy. Autharis, alarmed at the number and perseverance of his foes, on their approach withdrew his troops and treasures into the walled towns between the Alps and Apennines. The expedition nevertheless was futile. The twenty chiefs of the Franks were unable to maintain a good understanding among themselves, or to submit to the plans or command of a leader ; and, while they wasted the season in idle disputes, their army and resources gradually dwindled away, through desertion, intemperance, and disease. After a mock campaign of three months, without a single battle or capture of importance, but during which they plundered and desolated the country wherever they came, they once more turned their steps homeward, and re-entered France with a multitude of captives, driven like yoked oxen before them, in such a destitute and exhausted state, that they not only parted with the booty they had taken,



but sold their prisoners, their clothing, and even their arms, in the places through which they passed, in exchange for food. Childebert, in the end, esteemed himself fortunate to receive from Agilulfe, the successor of Autharis, an embassy offering peace and an annual tribute, and resigning to him the suzerainty of the Bavarian nation, till then scarcely known to the Franks, even by name.

These several wars had produced little to their projectors, either of glory or gain. A variety of influencing circumstances had operated to prevent their

doing so. The weakness of the princes had permitted a large extension of political power among the leudes, and these were more desirous of enriching themselves and increasing their private domains than continuing an endless course of foreign hostilities for the sole benefit of the monarch. Hence they had recently followed the royal standard with reluctance, and withdrawn from it the moment their stipulated term of service had expired. The multiplicity of wars also had necessarily diminished the available forces engaged in each; and these again were subdivided to meet the exigences created by the internal struggle still in progress between the conquerors and the ancient inhabitants of the land, who were continually receiving malcontent accessions in those foreigners whom the fate of arms consigned to bondage. But above all, there was a perpetual stream of immigration pouring into the country from beyond the Rhine, of Franks, Saxons, Allemanni, and other tribes, driven from their old settlements by new races pressing forward from the north, and in turn displacing their southern neighbours, in their search for fresh homes. The rule of the Merovingians seemed on the verge of dissolution. A confusion and restlessness, such as had preceded the fall of Rome, already prevailed; and the strife and weakness of the princes, and the jealousies and crimes of the queens, served but to heighten the general disorder.

Frédégonde endeavoured to turn the misfortunes of the country to her own account. With this intent she had engaged the warriors of a tribe of Saxons, who had long been established in Gaul, and whose swords were ever at the service of a purchaser, to assist the Bretons in their struggle with Gontran; while the Tolousan subjects of the young Clotaire had been encouraged to join the Visigoths and support Gondovald in their resistance to the Burgundians in Septimania. The Vascons, or Gascons, meanwhile, after trying frequent inroads from beyond the Pyrenees upon Aquitaine, had established themselves in what had been called by the Romans *Novempopulania*, but which thenceforward assumed the name of Gascony, whence the colonists could not be afterwards dislodged, and where they refused to acknowledge the superiority of the Frankish kings. In the north of France, the popular disquietude, and the symptoms of approaching revolution were even more distinctly perceptible. The inhabitants of Soissons, dissatisfied that Frédégonde and her son should reside and hold her court at Vaudreuil instead of the capital, threw off allegiance, invoked the protection of the Austrasians, and solicited Childebert to give them his son Theodebert, then a child about three years old, for king. The royal infant was accordingly inducted to his new kingdom, and formally established there, with a train of officers, of dukes and counts, and a mayor of the palace, now become a regular appendage to the Frankish courts. Meaux followed the example of Soissons; and Frédégonde in vain protested against so flagrant an usurpation, and urged Gontran to maintain the rights of her son, which he had formerly guaranteed.

In the midst of this complication of domestic treachery and personal rivalry, the struggle of the leudes and fideles against the authority of the

Merovingian princes was daily extending throughout France, and gathering strength from the accession of those new chiefs who accompanied their followers from beyond the Rhine, and found employ in the armies of their settled kinsmen. This hostile feeling has already been alluded to, in connexion with the revolt which gave a short-lived throne to Gondovald. It now betrayed itself still more unequivocally in Neustria and Burgundy; and grew to an open rupture between Gontran and his nobles. The old king, indeed, was subjected to coercion and humiliation in his very palace, and dared not stir abroad in the streets of Orléans, or even to church, without a strong guard. His government was overawed by the violence of his subjects, his edicts were treated with contempt, and the land was filled with rapine and plunder;—the chiefs themselves roaming over the country with their vassals in the character of bandits. Law and justice, with such a state of society, could find no breathing space; and each person did what seemed good in his own eyes, without any other fear than the vague one that he might in turn become the victim of some more powerful man than himself. Gontran was of too feeble a character to attempt to reduce this discord to order. Brunehaut feared also to take a determined stand against the leudes by whom she was surrounded, lest they should strip her of the authority which she held upon sufferance; and Frédégonde rather encouraged than opposed the turbulence of her adherents, and maintained emissaries at the other courts to promote the discontent of the nobles, as she thought to profit by the constraint to which her adversaries were reduced, in re-seizing the royal power and administering the affairs of her son's realm.

It was at her instigation, and under her guidance, that a dangerous conspiracy was formed at the court of Metz, by Rauchingue, Orsion and Berthefrède, to assassinate Childebert and subvert his throne. In this plot, Rauchingue caused it to be published that he was a natural son of Clotaire I.; and, aided by the resources with which Frédégonde supplied him, he drew around him a large party, who swore to support him in an attempt to obtain the actual government of the kingdom, while the child Theodebert should retain the name of king. Orsion and Berthefrède undertook to dispose of Gontran, who was to be replaced on his throne by Thierry, the younger brother of Theodebert, whose government the assassins were to direct in the same way as Rauchingue conducted that of Austrasia. Before the project, however, was ripe for execution, Gontran obtained notice of its tendency from some of the parties engaged, and immediately informed his nephew of the danger which threatened him. Childebert, without betraying the least alarm, or indeed any consciousness of treasonable designs, sent for Rauchingue, and had a long private interview with him at the palace [587]. At his departure the monarch accompanied the conspirator to the door, and coldly bowed to him on leave-taking. This was the signal for three men, posted in the court, to seize the traitor by the legs and drag him to the earth. He fell with his head on the entrance-steps, and his feet on the door-sill; and while one of his



Assassination of Rauchingue.



assailants held him down, the two others clove his head with their swords. His body was then stripped and thrown from a window of the palace into the street. His property and estates were confiscated; when it is said to have been ascertained that he possessed more wealth in his several mansions and castles than constituted the whole of the royal treasures. Orsion and Berthefrède, finding that the conspiracy was discovered, fled to their domains, gathered their vassals and a number of hired auxiliaries, and, uniting their forces, shut themselves up in a strong fortress which Orsion had built in the midst of his lands between the Meuse and the Moselle, determined to resist every attempt to bring them to justice.

Both Gontran and Childebert well understood, from the state of the country and the disposition of the people, that this revolt was of more importance than a mere affair of private ambition; and they agreed to join their forces in order to crush it, ere it should make head and become general through France. But previously to setting forth on the expedition, they concluded between them the treaty of Andelot, concerning the object and intentions of which there has been much controversy among French authors—some asserting that it was a boon to the leudes, whose assistance the kings were compelled to purchase at the price of recognising their hereditary claims to the dignities and estates which they held under the crown; and others maintaining that it was merely a strict alliance, offensive and defensive—which was now more than ever necessary to both Gontran and Childebert—for the preservation of their menaced thrones; in which the sovereigns mutually undertook to repel the offers of service of the discontented vassals of each other. It does not appear, however, that there need have been a dispute on the question. The provisions of the treaty must have benefited both parties. It was determined that such Austrasian leudes as should resort to the court of Gontran were to be sent back to Childebert; and deserters from Orléans were to be returned to Gontran. This was undoubtedly rendered necessary to the very existence of the two kings, since the vacillating nobles of each had power, by shifting sides, to ensure success or defeat to whichever prince they supported; but, as it would have been impracticable to establish such a rule without the concurrence of the parties on whom it was meant to operate, a clause was added, to the effect that the possession of all *benefices*—the royal grants were so called—should be confirmed to their holders, independent of any future disposition of the sovereign, for the time being, in whose territories they might lay. Without this the leudes could have had no protection from injustice and tyranny. The boundaries of the Frank kingdoms were not always the same, being altered at the death of some of the princes, as well as by occasional exchanges of territory with others; so that an estate, at one time in Austrasia, might in a few months become portion of the dominion of Orléans or Soissons, or be parcelled between all three realms, at the caprice of the respective monarchs. Hence the leudes had been kept perforce in an unsettled state of allegiance and of property; and

hence also the necessity for satisfying their claims, as an inducement for them to submit to stipulations, meant, in the first and chief place, to benefit their kings. The treaty closed with the exchange of some Provinces between Gontran and Childebert; and each took an oath to observe all the provisions of the compact, to hold inviolable the grants which had already been made in their realms, and to respect, in their persons and posterity, the hereditary succession and rights which they had then created, or at least then first recognised as settled law.

An event which occurred during the assembly of Andelot is characteristic of the times. Among the chiefs who had been summoned on the occasion was Gontran Bosan, the false friend of the pretender Gondovald, and still the sworn enemy of Brunehaut, and the most powerful of her opponents among the few leudes who sought to deprive her of all share in the Austrasian government. The queen was not less the foe of Bosan, and had procured him to be accused at the pleading—or parliament—of Belzonac, of sacrilege, in having been accessory to the plunder of his wife's tomb—she having been buried, after the custom of the Franks, with her jewels and richest robes, which were of considerable value. He was condemned, but appealed to the general meeting at Andelot; and his sentence being there confirmed, he sought for safety in flight. Pursued by the people of the king of Orléans, he entered the dwelling of Bishop Magneric, despite the opposition of the



attendant clergy, and presenting himself, sword in hand, before the prelate, exclaimed, "Grant me thy pardon and protection on the instant, or thou and I will perish together." Magneric had no time either to comply with, or to

repulse the demand of the refugee. The officers who had followed him set fire to the house, and the bishop was barely able to save himself and his clerical dependants from the flames, which spreading rapidly, soon surrounded the unfortunate Gontran, and drove him forth among his enemies. As he rushed from the blazing portals, he was met by a shower of arrows, which entered his body on all sides, while his brow was pierced by the long lance of a countryman. He fell dead in the street; and the riches he had amassed during a life of treachery and extortion, were added to the treasures of the two kings, his enemies.

The war then proceeded against Orsion and Berthefrède. The latter was a friend or lover of Brunehaut, who had not long before been god-mother to one of his sons. She earnestly implored him to desert his accomplices, and offered him pardon and a restoration to favour on that condition; but in vain. He declared his resolution to partake the fate of his comrades, and when compelled to abandon the castle in which he and Orsion had made their first stand, they took sanctuary together in a small church dedicated to St. Martin, which Orsion had founded on the peak of the rugged mountain of Vabres, on the eastern edge of the forest of Ardennes. This, converted into a fortress, was capable of sustaining a siege; but it was of short duration. The church was set on fire, and Orsion, rushing, like Gontran Bosan, through the flames, fell amid the swords and spears of a host; but not before he had slain Trudulfe, a count of the royal palace, and several of the hostile soldiers, by the blows with which he finally signalled his strength and his despair. Berthefrède was at first more fortunate. Favoured by the known love of Brunehaut, and not improbably by the sympathy of the leudes who fought against him, he found little difficulty in escaping to Verdun, where he was readily sheltered by the bishop in his private chapel, Childebert, however, enraged at the obstinacy with which the paramour of his mother had resisted all attempts to conciliate or subdue him, now threatened Godegisile, his general, that unless he forthwith transmitted to Metz the head of the rebel, his own should be forfeited. This quickened the vigilance of pursuit after Berthefrède. His delivery was demanded from the Bishop of Verdun, and on the refusal of the churchman to violate his sanctuary, the soldiers ascended to the roof of the chapel, whence they threw tiles and stones upon the head of the fugitive, till he lay a corpse upon the pavement below.

But, although this rebellion had totally failed in its object, such were the grievances, or such the restless turbulence of the Frank chiefs, a new revolt was contemplated almost as soon as the first had been suppressed. Sunegisile and Gallomaque, high officers of the household of the King of Austrasia, entered into a conspiracy against their master; but, ere the plot had obtained consistency, it was discovered, and its authors punished. Egidius, bishop of Rheims, was implicated in this affair, and was condemned, by a general assembly of the leudes, to be deposed. The clergy, who had already begun to separate their jurisdiction from that of the laity, complained of infringe-

ment of their privileges, and their influence was sufficient to procure a revision of the sentence. The case was submitted, in October, 590, to a council of bishops, held at Verdun, and as this assembly could not agree upon a decision, the matter was adjourned till November, and the council summoned to meet anew at Metz. Here several charges, some of which there is good reason to believe were added to the prelate's real offences, merely to blacken his character, and afford his judges a pretext for his condemnation, were preferred against Egidius, and supported by the kind of evidence in that day admissible. The bishop, it was said, had forged the royal signature, on several occasions, to grants of land and donations; had maintained a correspondence with Chilperic, and consented to and advised the putting of Brunehaut to death; and finally the treaty found at Chelles, which Frédégonde had disclosed to Gontran, whom it was intended to despoil of his kingdom, was attributed to Egidius, who at the time of its execution, was one of the council of regency. The bishops demanded three days to consider of their verdict; at the end of which they declared their colleague guilty, but implored for him the king's mercy. He was finally deprived of his see and banished to Strasburg.

While Brunehaut and Childebert thus struggled, with their lay and clerical vassals for mastery, in Austrasia, Frédégonde maintained a similar strife with the leudes of Neustria. A Frank, who had abandoned his wife for a mistress, encountering his brother-in-law, one day, they quarrelled and came to blows. In the strife, each slew his antagonist; and the two families, to avenge the death of their kinsmen, became embroiled in mortal feud. The city was consequently filled with confusion and murder, and neither friends nor priests could allay the wrath of the contending parties. The queen herself vainly endeavoured to reconcile them. Three men of one family opposed themselves with savage resolution to any other settlement of the feud than the extermination of their opponents. Frédégonde, nevertheless, had determined to suppress the disorders which daily insulted her authority, and soon devised a cure for the obstinacy with which her mediation had been received. She invited the three Franks to a banquet in the palace, placed them all side by side on the same bench, and after the repast, when the circulation of the wine cup, and the songs of the minstrels had made them merry, she gave a signal to three men, who waited behind, to fulfil their instructions. The ruffians advanced noiselessly upon their victims, each at the same instant raised his axe, and the festive hall was in a moment stained with blood [591].

The Franks, although inured to violence, and wont to derive pleasure from scenes of cruelty and slaughter, had always been celebrated for their hospitality, and for their respect to the sacred character of a guest. They therefore at once resented the perfidy of the queen: and laying siege to the royal palace, expressed their determination to bring Frédégonde to justice. The insurrection spread into the neighbouring towns and villages; and but for the fortunate arrival of some troops, who retained their fidelity to the king and his mother, the latter must have expiated her tyranny with her life.



A short time after this event, the young Clotaire fell sick at Paris, and the physicians having pronounced his recovery hopeless, Frédégonde gave herself up to despair. She knew that she had little mercy or kindness to expect from friends or enemies. Gontran, her brother-in-law, was marching upon Paris to take possession of his new realm, and the Neustrian nobles were quietly but rapidly deserting the fallen queen, and hasting to proffer their services to her successor, who had already advanced with his army to Sens. It seemed, however, as if the sword which was constantly suspended over the heads both of Frédégonde and Brunehaut by a thread, was sustained by a guardian spirit, whenever its fall appeared inevitable. Clotaire, abandoned by the doctors, was recovered by the attentions of his mother, and Gontran returned to his own capital in peace. Frédégonde felt that she had narrowly escaped on this occasion, and, looking to the future with doubt and apprehension, sought to renew the amicable relations which had once subsisted between her and the King of Orléans. With the view of conciliating him, she solicited that he would become godfather to her son, who, although he was nine years of age, had not yet been baptised. The old man consented. It was in vain that Childebert, who evidently suspected the design of Frédégonde, sought to dissuade his uncle from connecting himself again with a woman who had more than once hired assassins to take away his life. Gontran replied with a

true and noble spirit of Christianity, "I cannot deny to my nephew what I have never refused to the meanest of my domestics." The baptism accordingly took place in the church of Nanterre. The young king received the name of Clotaire, which he had previously borne, and Gontran taking his nephew in his arms at the font, uttered, according to Father Daniel, this prayer, "' May it please God to preserve the life of this child, to endue him with grace worthily to sustain the name he bears, and to render him as powerful as the prince who last bore it.' At the conclusion he took the lad with him to eat at his own table, gave him presents, and received others in return, and departed for his kingdom."

About two years after the christening of Clotaire, Gontran died at Châlons, at the age of sixty. He is said, in a letter written to Philippe Augustus, by an abbot of Cluny, to have become a monk at the close of his life; but whether so or not, it is certain that he bore a high reputation for sanctity and religious zeal. Gregory of Tours, who was less enthusiastic or superstitious than his contemporaries in general, attributes to him miracles even while he was living, and the clergy of his realm numbered him among the saints. All that can fairly be said in his behalf at the present day, however, is that he was less implacable in his resentments than the kings among whom he lived, and that few wars arose in consequence of his personal ambition. He was weak-minded, inconstant alike in his enmities and friendships, and too fond of ease and indulgence to govern his kingdom with vigour. His nobles ruled with absolute power in their several domains, and the daily violence and injustice perpetrated with impunity, from a reliance on his supineness, made his reign more mischievous to his people than that of any of the tyrants who had preceded him.

Childebert, according to the act of his adoption by Gontran, inherited the kingdom of Orléans; and the balance of power which the old king had striven to maintain during his life among the Frank princes, was thus at once destroyed. The kingdom of Clotaire was less than a third the extent of that of his cousin, even in France, and with the disposition of Childebert, there was every probability that the smaller State would soon be entirely absorbed by its dangerous neighbour. The genius of Frédégonde saved her son from ruin, and afforded him a triumph to which a less determined or more scrupulous politician would never have aspired. The commencement of hostilities, nevertheless, by which this result was achieved, was owing to the impatient hatred of the King of Austrasia and his mother.

Scarcely had Gontran been laid in the tomb, when Childebert, assembling the forces of his two kingdoms, put them in motion towards the capital of Clotaire. He had already entered the territory of Soissons, and was advancing through Champagne, before Frédégonde was able to muster an army to oppose him. Her energy and alacrity, however, enabled her to make up for lost time. The leudes and vassals of the invaded realm, met [593], at Braine, the ancient residence of Clotaire I., where the queen went with her son to

review them. The sight of the lad, then but ten years old, affected the sturdy veterans, who were met to defend his throne and life; but Frédégonde did not trust wholly to their sympathies or fidelity. She had brought with her to the camp a large supply of money from the royal treasures, and this she distributed freely among soldiers and officers, adding promises of future reward for their success. She then disclosed to her chiefs the stratagem she had conceived to defeat the designs of her enemies.

It was the custom of the Frankish cavalry, immediately they had pitched their tents, to turn their horses loose to graze in the neighbourhood, with small bells attached to their necks, to tell the direction they had taken when it was desired to re-catch them. Frédégonde supplied similar bells to all the horsemen of her army, and directed them each to cut down a branch from a tree. Thus equipped, the troops advanced under cover of the night, and at day-break next morning reached the town of Troucy, near which lay the camp of Childebart. The cavaliers, who were in the van, now fastened the bells to their steeds, and covering themselves with the boughs they had brought with them, quickened their pace as they emerged upon the plain, and bore direct for the tents of their adversaries. Distant objects were still scarcely distinguishable through the morning mist; but a soldier on guard, observing an unusual appearance, hastened to his comrades, exclaiming in dismay, "I perceive a wood where yesterday was nothing but the naked plain."—"And



do you not hear," responded an alarmed soldier, "the bells of our horses sounding from the midst of it?" At that moment a blast of trumpets was heard; the moving coppice parted, and the Neustrian warriors advancing in order of battle fell upon the camp of the still sleeping Austrasians, and massacred a large number before they could be aroused to a sense of their danger, much less to make an effort to defend themselves. Wintrio, who was now in the pay of Childebart, in vain endeavoured to restore the courage and confidence of his troops after this onslaught. They fled in every direction,

leaving their tents, baggage, stores and booty, in the hands of the victors; and Frédégonde, after having cleared from enemies the territory of her son, pursued the fugitives into their own dominions, and ravaged their country as far as the gates of Rheims. Childebert, his mother, and his people, were panic-stricken; and notwithstanding the deep enmity which they cherished against the Neustrians, they sought no more, during the life of Frédégonde, to interfere by aggression with her government.

The rest of the reign of Childebert was occupied in what may be called foreign wars; one against the indomitable Bretons, in which, however, he appears to have been worsted; and the other against the Varni, a people settled about the mouths of the Rhine, whose very name came to be exterminated in the course of their struggle for independence. Childebert died in 596, leaving Austrasia to his eldest son Theodebert; and his Burgundian provinces, thenceforward called the kingdom of Burgundy, to his other son Thierry, to whom was also given Alsace, where he had been brought up, and Turgau, Suntgau, and the portion of Champagne which belonged to Austrasia. Theodebert at this time was only in his eleventh year, and Thierry in his tenth. The government consequently was vested in the hands of their grandmother Brunehaut; who fixing upon Metz in Austrasia as her residence, appointed one of her most trusty partisans, Varnachaire, Mayor of the Palace in Châlons, and consigned to him the public administration in behalf of King Thierry.

Frédégonde meanwhile was not idle. On the first news of the death of Childebert, calculating on the diminished strength of her ancient rival, she called the Neustrian leudes together, and hastening to Paris, which Gontran, towards the end of his reign, had added to the kingdom of Orléans, laid siege to and captured that city, and pursuing her career of conquest, took many other towns and villages, with their domains, along the banks of the Seine, and imposed the domination of her son upon the inhabitants. Brunehaut, though harassed by the discontent and turbulence of the Austrasian leudes, who unwillingly submitted to her authority, was not so feeble as to submit without a contest. She sent an army against the adversary; but this being beaten at Latofao, near Soissons, the road lay open to Metz, whither Frédégonde's troops were advancing, when the old queen was seized with her last sickness. She died in 597, and was buried beside Chilperic, her husband, in the church of St. Vincent. Her character is too deeply impressed upon her acts to be mistaken. Lust, slaughter, and dissimulation led her to the commission of crimes, from which even the annalists of her own wild times seem to recoil with disgust and horror; but, at the same time, it must not be overlooked that she was an able ruler, and that but for her shrewd and calculating policy, her son would have been driven from his kingdom, and the Frank leudes would probably have effected the overthrow of the Merovingian dynasty long before that event actually occurred.

Of that remorseless generation which had so long kept France embroiled

in petty, but sanguinary warfare, Brunehaut alone now remained. Her two grandsons and the son of her old enemy were too young to take part in the direction of public affairs; and the queen therefore, and the Mayors of the Palace, enjoyed almost absolute authority throughout France. As the most talented and most powerful among the rulers of the time, Brunehaut was looked upon as the stay and protector of the whole country, and her court was thronged by all the restless and ambitious spirits who sought to acquire wealth and honour by new adventures. She arose from the confusion and wreck by which she had been surrounded during the existence of Frédégonde, as from a lethargy in which she had been gifted with new being and energy. The old enemies of the Franks were soon taught to tremble, when the undivided strength of their antagonists could be turned against them. The Abares, who had continued to press forward upon the Rhine, were driven back in terror, and compelled to pay homage to a foe they had begun to despise. The Lombards renewed treaties of amity with the Austrasians, and the head of the Catholic church sued to them as protectors and patrons of the Holy See. The great Pope Gregory had formed a close alliance with this people during the life of Childebert, whom he had induced, on more than one occasion, to aid him in the promulgation of such pontifical decrees as were obnoxious to the native clergy. He now addressed his designing flatteries to Theodebert, on whom he bestowed the titles of "most illustrious, most pious, and most christian," craving that the execution of the new laws of subordination which he had imposed on the bishops of Gaul, might be enforced by the royal authority; and that such as refused obedience might be punished. A few relics to be worn by the prince in battle were the cheap reward of his services, in thus causing to be recognised in his dominions a power which was soon to become antagonist to that of his descendants.

It was about the time of the death of Childebert that Gregory had formed the design of converting the Anglo-Saxons to the Roman faith, and enrolling them among the vassals of papal sovereignty. He accordingly, in 597, despatched on this mission Augustine, prior of the convent of St. Andrew's at Rome, whom he consecrated previously to his departure as "bishop of England," and to whom, and his companions he gave letters to Thierry, Theodebert and Brunehaut, requesting their aid in the expedition. In the curious epistle sent to the young Frank kings he treats the British Saxons as their vassals, saying "I thought that you must ardently desire the happy conversion of your subjects to the faith professed by yourselves, who are their kings and masters; thence it was that I determined to send Augustine, the bearer of the presents, with other servants of God to labour under your auspices." To Brunehaut, whose numerous and atrocious crimes were not unknown to the Pontiff, he wrote, "We pray you, whose zeal is ardent, whose works are precious, and whose soul is strengthened by the fear of the Almighty, to aid us in this great work;" adding, "Next to God, it is to you that England must be indebted for its conversion." It is due to the queen

to say that she received the missionaries kindly at the court of Metz, supplied them with all necessary provisions and money for their journey, and added to their train some pious Franks to act as interpreters—the language of the Franks and the Saxons, according to William of Malmesbury and Bede, being nearly the same.

The homage thus generally paid to Brunehaut, however, seems to have rendered her intolerably haughty and overbearing, and to have created a stronger opposition than ever to her authority among the Austrasian leudes. The full details have not been recorded, but in 599, Wintrio, Duke of Champagne, a distinguished general, having been put to death by her orders, the whole of the chiefs and nobles of the kingdom rose in revolt, and combining their forces, compelled Theodebert to banish her from the realm. Every one deserted her, as well those on whom she had heaped her favours, as the ancient enemies of her sway, and she was obliged to consult her personal safety by flight. A singular incident is connected with her escape. Arriving, according to some authorities, alone and on foot, at the little town of Arcis-sur-Aube, situated on the frontiers of Champagne and Burgundy, she found a poor man named Didier, who at her entreaty, undertook to conduct her to



the court of her second grand-son, Thierry. The journey accomplished, the guide, ignorant and unfit as he was, was recompensed for his fidelity with the bishopric of Auxerre. Father Daniel, in relating the circumstance, says that Didier was an Austrasian nobleman, disguised as a peasant, in order the better to effect his own escape and that of the queen; and his account is supported

by the History of the Bishops of Auxerre, which makes Didier a relative of the queen. It is probable, however, that the churchmen, in their anxiety to maintain the dignity of the See, subsequently added this relationship and nobility, since there could scarcely have arisen a question on the subject, concerning any known Frank chief; and if Didier was a kinsman of Brunehaut, he was certainly not a Frank, but a Visigoth. As regards qualification, there are innumerable instances of men of the meanest capacity, and wholly uneducated, attaining, for more equivocal services than in this case were rendered to Brunehaut, and at periods considered much more enlightened, the highest church dignities.

The grandmother of the young king was well received at Châlons, and soon contrived so to ingratiate herself with the court, as to induce a declaration of war against the King of Neustria, for the recovery of those places on the banks of the Seine, which had been seized upon by Frédégonde immediately after the death of Chilbert. To assist in this expedition, Recarède, King of the Visigoths, contributed a body of troops; and Theodebert sent, not only his Austrasian forces, but a large army of his German vassals, and of those predatory bands who had not yet obtained settlements on either side of the Rhine, and whose swords were ever at the disposal of the best paymasters. Clotaire mustered all the strength of his realm to oppose the invaders, and gave them battle [Anno 600], near the village of Doromelles, now called Dormelles, a short distance from Moret, in the territory of Sens. He was overwhelmed, however, by the number of his assailants, and flying from the field, was driven first to Melun, and afterwards to Paris; and subsequently he was compelled to seek shelter and concealment in the depths of the forest of Bretonne, so often the lurking place of the fugitive Frankish princes. Neustria was then ravaged in the most fearful manner, and the authorities of the kingdom were eventually obliged to accept peace on terms the most humiliating to themselves and their king. The towns captured by Frédégonde were restored; the portion of Champagne which had belonged to the realm of Soissons was detached, and together with part of Picardy, the Isle of France, and the province of Artois, were formed into the Duchy of Dentelin, and added to the dominions of Thierry; while Theodebert appropriated to himself all the country between the Seine and the Loire, as far as the borders of Britany. The kingdom of Clotaire was thus reduced to twelve Counties,—governments of Counts—and he himself was consequently placed entirely at the mercy of his enemies, who, nevertheless, undertook to preserve him on the throne which they had so nearly destroyed.

The victors in this struggle, however, did not escape uninjured. The Visigoths and Germans, but more especially the latter, not content with the spoil which they had obtained in Neustria, turned, when the war closed, on the country of their allies, imposed heavy contributions on the inhabitants, whom they treated, in every respect, as enemies, plundered their cities and towns, and ransacked and desecrated their churches and altars. The

harvest was destroyed or consumed by the strangers, and the natives were reduced to the utmost misery, from famine and destitution. It may be observed indeed, in all these contests, that, whatever advantage accrued to the kings from their wars, the people were invariably reduced by them to a state of wretchedness, which, in the present day, it is difficult to describe or to conceive. Desolated towns and villages, ruined fields and vineyards, violated females, and men carried into captivity, were scenes on which men gazed so frequently, that sympathy with the suffering they indicated ceased to be expressed, even if it continued to be felt, by the best informed, and most merciful.

And the ravages of barbarian auxiliaries were not the sole, or the worst misfortunes, inflicted on the land. The insatiate vengeance of Brunehaut, who though, in behalf of Thierry, she had consented to make use of the power of Theodebert, had not forgiven the latter for having consented to her expulsion from Austrasia, produced a civil war between her grandsons. Every art which age and experience had taught her as calculated to win the confidence and influence the conduct of youth, was exerted upon Thierry to render him obedient to her will. She flattered his vanity, indulged all his growing passions, and became the unscrupulous pander to his most profligate vices, in order to acquire ascendancy over his mind, and controul over his actions. "She," says M. Thierry, "in whom Pope Gregory had discovered inexhaustible treasures of sanctity and divine grace, to maintain her influence over her grandson, dissuaded him from marriage, and was careful to furnish him with women of pleasure and beautiful slaves." Before the king had completed his sixteenth year, he had three children by different mistresses, procured by Brunehaut; and when the old queen had thus fixed her personal sway, she cast about earnestly for means of establishing in authority a Mayor of the palace, who might be subservient to her political views. Bertoald, who occupied that important post on her arrival at Châlons, was too honest and simple-minded a man for her purpose; yet standing in high favour, as he did, with the leudes, he could not be safely displaced. The subtle and infamous Brunehaut, however, was not long ere she devised a mode of removing him without suspicion. The war between Clotaire and her grandsons was then in progress, and she procured Bertoald, partly it may be by treachery, and partly perhaps by her counsel, to occupy such a position in the field, that hostile arrows, whether from his own ranks or those of the avowed adversary, quieted all apprehension from him; and Protadius, a wily and supple Gallo-Roman, devoted to the interests of the court, was chosen to replace him.

Notwithstanding the opposition of the Frank leudes, by whom the new Mayor was detested, and who threw every obstacle in the way of accomplishing his measures, war was declared by Thierry in 604 against his brother Theodebert. Brunehaut, to remove the odium of this unnatural quarrel, persuaded the king, and caused it to be published among his vassals, that Childebart had been imposed upon by his queen at the birth of her eldest-

born, who was not his child, but the offspring of a poor gardener, whom she had admitted to her embraces. This story, improbable as it was, and wholly unsupported by evidence, was deemed by some sufficient to justify an invasion; and the Burgundian army was accordingly put in motion towards the frontiers of Austrasia. The majority of the chiefs and soldiers, nevertheless, were indisposed to the war, and advanced with repugnance against a people who had so recently been their comrades and acquaintance, and among whom they must have reckoned numerous friends and kinsmen. This general feeling of ill-will gathered strength and became more universal daily, till halting at Carissiac (Kiery-sur-Oise), a revolt burst forth among the army, and the troops refused to proceed. The indignation of the soldiery was directed almost exclusively against Protadius, who was said to have been the instigator of hostilities, and search being made for him throughout the camp, he was at length found calmly playing at chess with Petrus, the king's chief physician, in the royal tent. Thierry, trembling for the fate of his favourite, sent Oncilène, a leader who enjoyed considerable esteem among the soldiers, to desire the latter to respect the person of his Minister; but the General, instead of fulfilling his mission, told the troops that the king abandoned Protadius to their mercy. The unfortunate mayor was torn in pieces on the spot, by the infuriated crowd; and Thierry, perceiving the disposition of his followers, immediately afterwards broke up his camp, and returned home. The mortification of Brunehaut was extreme; but the temper exhibited by the Franks taught her prudence, and she reserved the gratification of her smothered malignity for a more favourable occasion.

Scarcely had this project failed, ere another species of opposition presented itself to humiliate and thwart the plans of the old queen. Columb or Columban, an Irish or Scottish monk, who had founded in the little northern Isle of Iona a monastery of Culdees—an order of Christians whose peculiar tenets are unknown, but who appear on some points to have dissented from the dogmas of Rome—quitting his own shores, came to diffuse his doctrines among the Franks. His first labours were among the wood-cutters and goat-herds of the Vosges, many of whom, though Christian in name, had scarcely heard of the gospel, and were still pagans both in creed and in practice. His converts soon formed a numerous body, and the reputation of the good father spread wide through the country. Thierry and his grandmother having heard of his fame and his miracles, went to visit him and request his prayers; but, instead of flattering the king, Columb reproached him with his irreligion and the licentious life which he was leading among debauched women, “so that the royal race of the Franks was no longer propagated except in infamous places.” Instead of blessing his children as desired, he told Brunehaut that “as they had sprung from unlawful intercourse, they would never be permitted to bear the sceptre of their father.” The old queen, enraged by this plain-speaking, so different from the treatment she had experienced from the head of the Apostolic church, caused an accusation of heresy to be preferred against

the missionary before a council of bishops, and procured him to be condemned to banishment from France [605]. The soldiers sent to enforce the execution



of this sentence threw themselves at the feet of the venerable Culdee, and entreated his forgiveness of the crime they were charged to commit. "From that moment," says Lavallée, the French Historian, "the church, persecuted in the person of Columb, abandoned Brunehaut, and made common cause with the leudes." It appears certain that some dispute between the court and the clergy arose about this time; but it is doubtful whether the misunderstanding originated concerning Columb, who had been convicted of heterodox notions, and refused to yield obedience to the Pope. It is more probable that the church, finding that the conduct of Brunehaut and her grandson had become a matter of public scandal, was compelled to take some notice of their irregularities, and thus incurred the old queen's indignation.

But, notwithstanding the opposition of the clergy and the leudes, Brunehaut continued to pursue her career as haughtily as ever. Oncilène, who had misrepresented the wishes of the king in the affair of Protadius, had his foot struck off by her orders; and instead of filling the vacant office of Mayor of the palace with a Frank, another Gallo-Roman, named Claudius, she placed at the head of the administration. The only deference paid to popular opinion concerning the vicious life and crimes of the queen and Thierry, were exhibited in the foundation of several churches, monasteries and hospitals, and a reference in the general assemblies to what had been done by the court to further the mission of Augustine to

England. It may be doubted nevertheless whether the Burgundians would have submitted to a sovereignty which had grown universally odious, had not some general advantage accrued to counteract the mere feelings of the people. The able government of Brunehaut supplied this counterpoise. Under her direction the nation became more flourishing, the land was better cultivated, and the inhabitants more moderately taxed than at any former period of the Frank domination. There yet exist in the country remains of several raised high-roads or causeways, the construction of which has been assigned by tradition to Brunehaut, and which still bear her name; and numerous towns and villages sprung up in places which till then had not been reclaimed from primeval wilderness.

In 610, the war which the queen had endeavoured six years before to bring on between her grandsons, burst forth unexpectedly. Theodebert made an inroad into Alsace, which had recently, on some agreement between the brothers, been separated from Austrasia, and annexed to the dominions of Thierry. The latter protested against this breach of treaty, and a general council was called at Seltz on the banks of the Rhine to decide the dispute. Thierry presented himself at the meeting with a guard of ten thousand men; but he was soon surrounded by such a multitude of Austrasians, that he was compelled to submit to whatever judgment his brother thought proper to dictate on the cause pending between them. This manifest injustice was productive of the most bitter feelings; and immediately on their return from Seltz, both parties prepared for the deadly conflict which was seen to be inevitable. Each endeavoured to obtain the alliance of Clotaire; but that prince, who had been the victim of their fraternity, now hoped to profit from their dissension, and refused to enter into any treaty for the assistance of either. He was next solicited for a promise of neutrality, which he gave to each, on the same condition—namely, that whichever was victor should restore to him the provinces of which he had been stripped after the battle of Doromelles.

This negociation having been concluded, Thierry assembled at Langres a large army, which he at once led into the Austrasian territory, and commenced ravaging the country in the manner which has been already so frequently described as customary among the Franks. The preparations of Theodebert occupied a longer space than those of his brother, and when he advanced to meet the invaders it was with so inadequate a force that he was beaten at Toul, and compelled to retreat precipitately towards the Rhine, where he was soon joined by his German auxiliaries, and enabled once more to assume an attitude of defiance. So confident was he now that he advanced to meet the Burgundians, and found them encamped on the plain of Tolbiac, at the same spot where Clovis his ancestor had encountered the Ripuairians, and vowed to abjure the pagan creed of his youth. The battle which ensued was the most terrible, if we may credit the account of the Historian Fredegarius, of all that had been witnessed by the Franks since they became a nation.

The combattants, it is said, fought with such desperate resolution, and were wedged in such close array, front to front and side by side, that when at evening the battle was over, whole battalions of corpses remained on the ground in their ranks, as if swept from existence by a single stroke—many of them still standing upright, unable, from the pressure of their comrades around them, to fall.

But still the fury of the victor was unappeased. The broken and disordered Austrasians who were able to quit the field of Tolbiac fled towards Cologne, the roads to which were strewn thick with dead bodies; and the pursuit and carnage were continued even beyond the Rhine. Theodebert himself fell into the hands of his brother Thierry, who immediately deprived him of all the insignia of royalty, and sent him prisoner to Châlons. His long hair was there cut off, and in 612 he was put to death by order of Brunehaut, who thus avenged herself for the indignities to which she had been subjected at the court of Metz. Merovæus, the son of Theodebert, who was still a child, was seized at Cologne by a Burgundian soldier, who, holding him by the heel, dashed out his brains against a stone. Thus ended the reign and race of Theodebert.

Thierry, now become sole master of Burgundy and Austrasia, made no scruple of treating his promise to Clotaire with contempt. The latter, however, taking advantage of the war between the brothers, had already resumed the territory to which he was entitled, and when called upon to resign it expressed a determination to contest the possession to extremities. Thierry consequently declared war, and directed a strong army against him; but on his march towards the frontier he was attacked by dysentery, which in a few days ended together his ambitious projects and his life [613]. He left four sons, of whom the eldest was but ten years old; and their great-grand-mother, to whom was assigned their protection, had reached the great age of eighty, and had rendered herself universally odious to the Franks—especially by the murder of Theodebert.

The disgust with which Brunehaut was regarded soon displayed itself less equivocally than in verbal protestations or objectless revolts. The Burgundian and Austrasian leudes entered into a general confederacy under Pepin and Arnoul, two of their most distinguished chiefs, and invited Clotaire to present himself among them, and assume the government of the kingdom. The son of Frédégonde was not slow to avail himself of the opportunity thus afforded to wreak vengeance on the head of his mother's most inveterate foe. He advanced, without encountering the slightest opposition, as far as the Rhine; receiving the homage of the people, and being spontaneously proclaimed king, in all the cities and towns through which he passed. Brunehaut, on the first news of this invasion, finding herself deserted by all classes, had withdrawn with the four young princes to Worms, whence she sent messengers to the German chiefs, soliciting their aid for Sigebert, the eldest of the sons of Thierry. The Germans, however, saw that her power to

reward them was at an end; and they had no esteem for her to induce them to take up her quarrel as a matter of justice. She soon therefore returned into Burgundy, mustered an army, which she placed at the command of Varnachaire, one of her old agents, who had been long before superseded as Mayor of the Palace under Thierry by Bertoald, and had recently been restored to that important office. But even Varnachaire, like the rest, foreseeing the inevitable fall of his patroness, abandoned her to her fate. Advancing at the head of his forces to the banks of the Aisne, he no sooner met the troops of Clotaire than he lowered his banners, and, facing about, returned with the foe as his acknowledged sovereign.

Brunehaut, unable to fly or to defend herself, was captured [613] in the little town of Orbe, between the lake of Geneva and Mount Jura, and brought thence to the camp of Clotaire, established on the banks of the Saône. The pent-up rage and hatred of years was now vented upon her aged, but far from venerable head. For three days she was left to the insults of the soldiery, and the tortures of the common executioner. On the fourth she was placed on the back of a camel—lacerated and bruised as she was—and paraded through the camp, amid the ribald cheers, the hootings, revilings and outrages of a pitiless mob; and at last she was fastened by the hair, and by one arm



and one foot, to the tail of a wild horse, and torn in pieces. What remained of her body was thrown by the soldiers into the bivouac fires, and reduced to

ashes. It has been said in behalf of Clotaire, that these multiplied cruelties emanated not from him, but from the leudes who had so long been opposed to Brunehaut, and over whom she had exercised such tyranny; but it does not appear that Clotaire endeavoured to intercede for the old queen, or to check the proceedings of her persecutors; nor indeed that he was shocked at an act which scarcely exceeded in atrocity some of the common punishments of the period. What became of the children of Thierry appears to be unknown.

The leudes and free soldiers generally profited by the revolution they had produced, in the plunder of the royal treasures amassed under Thierry and Theodebert. Varnachaire was retained in his office as Mayor of Burgundy, and a chief named Radon was appointed to the same post in Austrasia—the former, as the price of his services, exacting from the king an oath that his power and dignity should continue during life. The two ministers immediately afterwards departed for the seat of their respective government; each entrusted with authority, inferior only to that of Clotaire, inasmuch as they were bound by their oath of allegiance to obey the decrees which emanated from the palace of Clichy, the favourite residence of the Neustrian sovereign.

In the new distribution of honours and power which followed the death of Brunehaut, a Neustrian Frank named Herpon obtained the Dukedom of Burgundy, north of the Jura. This man, instead of endeavouring to conciliate the nobles and freemen of his government, whose authority had been supreme during the civil wars, wished to depress and bring them into servile subjection. The consequence was a revolt of the leudes, in which Herpon lost his life. Clotaire and his queen Bertrude were then at Marlem, a pleasure-house which they had in Alsace. The king immediately sent an army to punish the refractory Burgundians, who, unable to offer effectual resistance, were compelled to deliver up the leaders of the rebellion to the executioner. Among these, however, was one Aléthée, descended, it is said, from the ancient kings of Burgundy, who not only contrived to escape the sentence of his comrades, but had the address to procure himself to be appointed successor to Herpon. He appears to have been a man of singular talent in intrigue, of vast ambition, and of the most unscrupulous character. One of his first acts was to prevail upon Leudémond, bishop of Sion, to undertake a mission on his behalf to the queen. The sacred functions of the prelate obtained him access to Bertrude—a simple and credulous woman—when, according to Fredegarius, after making to her sundry revelations concerning things which she had believed to be shrouded in secrecy, he mysteriously announced to her that Clotaire would not outlive the year. He urged her therefore to collect together her robes, jewels and money, to fly with these to Sion, where Aléthée awaited her coming, and was ready, by espousing her, to maintain her on the throne. The queen, believing that the affirmations of a bishop were as the word of God, and tenderly loving her husband, made no answer to her treacherous counsellor, but burst into tears and retired to her chamber to

weep. She made no secret of what had been related to her; and Leudémond, finding that his object had failed, and dreading the just vengeance of the king, fled from the court and took sanctuary in the abbey of Luxeuil, where, by pretending contrition, and making a full confession of his crime and accomplices, he at length obtained pardon, and was permitted to resume his episcopal authority! Aléthée, however, was not allowed, this time, to escape so easily. Clotaire sent for him to his residence at Massolac, and, when brought into the royal presence orders were given to strike off his head.

But though the king was sufficiently powerful to defeat and punish his armed enemies, his authority was frequently set at nought elsewhere. The leudes continued the struggle which they had long before commenced for the establishment of a power independent of that of the crown; and this grew daily stronger, and acquired greater consistency and importance. Concession after concession was obliged to be made by the sovereign in order to retain the allegiance of his vassals in times of difficulty; and the clergy and laity united in enforcing stipulations which were calculated to bring the king back to the condition of the early Frank chiefs, whose authority, if not defined, was exceedingly limited. In the national assemblies this restrictive influence was most especially felt. In a great council held in 614 at Paris, Clotaire felt it necessary to renounce one of the most valuable of his privileges—that of naming bishops to the sees in his dominion. The plea for demanding this was the abuse which had arisen, as in the case of Didier, the guide of Queen Brunehaut, in bestowing vacant mitres upon laymen instead of clerks; “the pall,” according to Gregory of Tours, “being often openly sold to the highest bidder, and made a source of royal revenue, instead of a means of encouraging learning and piety.” At the same time, in order probably to check the pretensions of the Bishops—now rendered almost irresponsible—he undertook to defend the inferior clergy against the injustice of their superiors. And finally he consented to the abolition of all new imposts on the people, and decreed that the leudes should be indemnified for the losses they had sustained in the service of their several masters during the wars for the throne. Nor does this appear to have been the end of such claims. “In 617,” says the author of the ‘Continuation of Fredegarius,’ “the chiefs of Burgundy presented themselves before Clotaire at the village of Bonogèle (Bonneuil), where the king consented to and confirmed all their just demands.”

Ere long it appeared that Austrasia, weary of being deemed a mere province of Neustria, was desirous of having a king of its own. The leudes became restless and discontented, and complaints were frequent against the local governor. Clotaire, a pacific and prudent sovereign, was not regardless of the signs of the times; and accordingly, in 617, four years after the three Frank kingdoms had been reunited under one sceptre, he divided them into two, and conferred Austrasia upon his son Dagobert, a youth of about fifteen years old, who was sent to govern at Metz under the direction of Bishop

Arnoul, and of Pepin, who was appointed to supersede Radon as Mayor of the Palace. The division of territory made by Clotaire, however, was not satisfactory. The country of the Vosges and Ardennes, together with that portion of Aquitaine which, since the time of Sigebert, had been an appendage of the crown of Austrasia, were annexed to Neustria, and thence became a never-failing source of remonstrance and vexation to the new king and his subjects. The question concerning their jurisdiction, however, was at last amicably settled. Dagobert, about the year 625, went to Clichy, accompanied by a number of his leudes, to celebrate his marriage with Gamatrude, the sister of one of his father's wives. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the young man haughtily demanded of Clotaire the surrender to him of the Provinces anciently dependent upon Austrasia—protesting against the present which had been made him of the mere fragment of a kingdom. The father, whose native fierceness was somewhat mellowed by age, replied firmly, but calmly, that, in bestowing a gift, he had a right to apportion it at his pleasure; and that he was not disposed to concede more than he had already done. To avoid driving his son to hostile extremes, however, he consented to refer the matter to the decision of a great council; and eventually it was arranged, on the mediation of Arnoul and a number of the noblest chiefs of both nations, that Clotaire should retain the Southern Provinces; but that he should yield the towns and lands of the Ardennes and the Vosges to Dagobert; upon which the latter returned home, where a difficult and dangerous war was struggling into birth, which required all his military skill and ardour to prevent the entire overthrow of his throne and dissolution of his kingdom.

The peaceable disposition which of late years had been manifested by the Frank kings, and the disaffection of the leudes, which, though suppressed, had not been extinguished, and the existence of which was known beyond the precincts of France, had inspired Bertoalde, Duke, as he is generally called, but more properly, Chief, of the Saxons, settled on the borders of Austrasia, with a hope of being able to throw off the yoke of the Merovingian princes, and to free himself and his people from the heavy tribute which they had been accustomed to yield to the Franks. He had long laboured diligently to mature his opposition to the power which he was conscious would be speedily arrayed against him when his design should be detected; and he was so successful in his efforts that, before his project was even suspected, he had established a confederacy among those German chiefs who stood in the same position with respect to the foreign suzerain as himself, so strong that he deemed it not unsafe to send a messenger to Dagobert, declaring his determination forthwith to renounce allegiance. All parties, upon this intimation, prepared for war. Bertoalde, who had only to give the signal of marching to his followers, was first in the field. He passed the Austrasian frontier with a numerous army, and giving battle to Dagobert ere the latter could collect his troops, compelled him to retire within the entrenchments of his camp. From

this conflict the king narrowly escaped with life. A Saxon approached him so near as to cleave his helmet with a sabre-stroke ; and his troops, unable to advance or retreat, had to sustain a siege without stores or provisions. Clotaire meanwhile was assembling his vassals to march to the relief of his son. In order to hasten him, Dagobert sent a messenger with the pieces of his helmet, and the hair which the sabre of the Saxon warrior had cut from his head.

When Clotaire arrived, he found the Austrasians encamped on one bank of the Weser, with the river flowing between them and the enemy. At sight of the banners of the succouring army, the followers of Dagobert, who had been alarmed with false news, industriously spread by Bertualde, of the old king's death, raised loud shouts of joy ; and Clotaire, after brief greeting with his son, approached the brink of the river, and putting off his helmet, let his long locks, already half whitened by the life of hardship he had led, rather than by age, float in the wind, to shew that it was indeed he who had come against the rebellious tribes. The Saxons received the monarch with jeers and insult, till enraged, the Frank dashed with his horse through the Weser, seized the foremost of his revilers—believed to be Bertualde himself—and having struck him to the earth, cut off his head. This act of determined, though somewhat imprudent, bravery, struck awe into the Saxons, who when they saw the head of their chief, stuck on the point of a lance, paraded in front of their camp, took to flight. The Franks pursued, and the earth for miles was encumbered with the scattered bodies of men and horses, wounded and dying. Their revolt cost the Saxons dear. The author of the '*Gestes des Rois Francs*' says, that Clotaire [626] caused the Saxons, who were



made prisoners in the war, to be measured with his sword, when all such as exceeded the height of that formidable weapon, were cruelly massacred in cold blood. This vengeance was long remembered by the Germans, and contributed for several generations to stimulate their fury in all the wars they undertook against the Franks.

The victor did not long survive his triumph. He died at Clichy in the year 628, at the age of forty-two, having reigned over the kingdom of Neustria or Soissons from the time he was four months old. Clotaire was, for the age in which he lived, a man of considerable learning and talent, and, judging of him from his contemporaries, he was a just and merciful sovereign. His courage was unquestionable; and if he was too much addicted to the love of women, the vice was that of his age and nation, and appears to have been but little reproved by the clergy. His early knowledge was gleaned from the instructions of the monks, by whom his mother Frédégonde had surrounded his childhood and youth; and in his riper years he had been taught wisdom by hardship. The Allemanni owed to him the collection and confirmation of their laws, which were reduced to writing under the superintendence of a general assembly, consisting of thirty-three bishops, thirty-four Dukes, and sixty-four Counts. In some of the records of his time he is called Clotaire the Great, and in others Clotaire the *Débonnaire*. "He wasted too much of his time," it is said in the '*Gestes des Rois*,' "in hunting wild beasts; and listened too readily to the suggestions of women and young girls, for which he was frequently blamed by his leudes."

It would seem that the death of Clotaire, by rendering the king of Austrasia sole master of the realm, must in turn have reduced Neustria to the rank of a province; but by some unaccountable attraction it appears to have become settled that the seat of the national authority should not depart from the walls of Paris. This had been the capital of Clovis; had been the object of Chilperic's desires, when he sought to reign alone over France; and had been the envy of all, and a subject of contention to some, of the succeeding monarchs. In churches, in palaces, in commercial prosperity, and in the wealth and intelligence of its citizens, it had remained, from the time of Julian the Apostate, one of the chief cities of Gaul; and Dagobert, like his predecessors, regarded it as the most fitting seat of Empire in his realm. He accordingly quitted Metz on the death of his father, and fixed his residence in the palace of Clichy-la-Garenne.

He was not destined however to take possession of the inheritance of his father without a contest. He had a half-brother named Caribert, who with the aid of his uncle Brodulf—his mother's brother—had made a strong party in Neustria, and the standard of revolt was raised in the kingdom. Fear, however, of the Burgundians and Austrasians, who united to suppress the rebellion, compelled the prince to abandon his project, and to seek refuge, for himself and the more devoted of his adherents, in southern Aquitaine, among the scarcely subdued race which had given so welcome a reception to

the pretender Gondovald, and which yet retained its ancient enmity to the intrusive Franks. Here Caribert found friends and followers ready to assert his claims; but Dagobert, in order to avoid a struggle, consented to bestow on his brother the Aquitanian Provinces with the title of king. Toulouse consequently, the old Visigoth capital, became the seat of the new court, and the kingdom of Aquitaine stretched east and west from Rochelle to the Rhone, and was bounded on the south by the Pyrenees. This arrangement restored a temporary peace throughout the whole of the Frankish dominions.

The ten years of the reign of Dagobert, it has been observed, with the exception of some wars of short duration and little importance, formed an epoch of comparative repose for the Franks. "Between the furious struggles just ended, and the general confusion which immediately afterwards arose, the reigns of Clotaire and his son seemed interposed, as a calm between two tempests."

Dagobert, judging from the evidence left to us, which, however, is admitted to be imperfect, appears to have been a stern and unflinching, but at the same time a just and temperate monarch. He had the address and courage to make the authority of the law feared by the leudes and great vassals of the crown; and his justice and impartiality caused his name to be revered among all the inferior grades of the people. The first act of his reign was to make a progress through his realm, in which he restored order and established better rule in all the places to which he came. He went first to Burgundy. "Here," says the 'Continuation of Fredegarius,' "he struck such great terror into the bishops, the great feudatories, and the other leudes at his arrival, that all marvelled thereat; but he filled the poor people with great joy by the justice which he caused to be done them. Proceeding afterwards to the city of Langres, he so equitably judged the causes of the leudes, and those of the poor as well as the powerful, without respect to persons, or care for recompence, that he rendered himself, as may well be believed, highly acceptable to God. From Langres he passed on to Dijon and Laône, where he applied himself with such zeal to the duties he had undertaken, that he had neither needful time to eat nor to sleep. The same day that he departed from Laône for Châlons, having entered a bath before setting out upon his journey, he caused Brodulf, the uncle of his brother Caribert, to be put to death. The culprit was slain by the Dukes Amalgaire and Arnebert, aided by the patrician Willibald." The precise nature of the reformation thus effected by Dagobert has not been specified; but from the confusion which had long prevailed throughout the country, it is not difficult to conceive the misery of the people at large, in being subjected to the caprice of a more than semi-barbarous nobility, and a church scarcely farther advanced than those unlettered chiefs in civilization. The nobles, besides the warfare in which they were frequently engaged on behalf of the sovereign, had quarrels of their own, which they settled by the

sword; and when they made inroads into the territory of a hostile leude or governor, they pillaged towns and villages, laid waste the land, carried into slavery the inhabitants, and, in all respects, conducted themselves in the same manner as if they had been leading the national armies against a foreign enemy. The strong oppressed the weak, and the daring became the masters of the timid. Not unfrequently he who had the most extensive notoriety was able to hold in awe the population of a province; for the repute of his success as a bandit attracted to him crowds of adventurers, whom he was enabled to support and enrich by his depredations. "Force," says M. Guizot, "was the true and habitual guarantee of rights. The only means of procuring an acknowledgment of, or respect for rights, was incessant recourse to violence. No institution availed; and so universally was this felt, that institutions ceased to be invoked." Dagobert in endeavouring to repress this state of things, to restore order among his subjects, and to create a salutary fear of the law, merited the gratitude of all persons—but more especially of those who were too feeble to repel the aggressions of power by their like. The popularity acquired by the king for his proceedings is abundantly testified by traditions concerning his administration, and by the name conferred upon him by the lower orders of "The good king Dagobert."

After Burgundy, Dagobert visited Austrasia, where, on his throne and in royal apparel, he still exercised, with the same diligence and impartiality, his magisterial functions. The jealousy of the Austrasians, however, had been awakened by the preference shewn by the king for Neustria, in removing thither his court; and as the inhabitants generally were less enlightened than the Neustrians and Burgundians, the same good effects did not ensue from his exertions. There was less difference in the country between the manners and habits of the leudes, their vassals and the middle classes. Commerce and manufactures were more rare, and the population, augmented from day to day by immigrants from beyond the Rhine, was less settled, had less to lose from rapine, and was more warlike. Justice, therefore, to most people was, in Austrasia, rather an infliction than a benefit; being calculated to deprive them of the right to avenge their own wrongs and grievances, and to call them to account for bettering their fortunes by seizing the lands and goods of their neighbours.

The sullen discontent of this northern people, who regarded as an invasion of their privileges, the attempt of the king to impose on them forms and observances for the due appreciation of which society among them was not sufficiently advanced, displayed itself unequivocally in a war which commenced in the third year of the reign of Dagobert. A Frankish merchant named Samon, who, according to some authorities, was a native of Sens, and, according to others, of Brabant, had gone, during the reign of Clotaire II., with a company of his countrymen to trade with the Slavonians, who at that time peopled not only the banks of the Drave and the Save, like those who still bear the name, but Bosnia, Dalmatia and Croatia, and

extended their dominion even beyond the Danube into Bohemia. Among the numerous tribes into which the race was divided was one called the Venedes, which after having wandered to the shores of the Baltic, and settled for some time near the mouth of the Vistula, had returned to the banks of the Danube and been reduced to the most abject slavery by the powerful nation of the Abares, who had taken possession of the territory. It was not long after this occurrence when Samon and his companions arrived among the Venedes, and found them in a state of revolt against their new masters; because, as it was affirmed, the Abares, when at war, compelled their vassals to take the foremost rank in battle in order to receive the brunt of the enemy's onset; but when the victory was won the Venedes were allowed no share of the spoil. Not content even with this tyranny, or the imposition of a heavy tribute on their unfortunate captives, the Abares had taken from them their wives and daughters, and kept them for the compulsory propagation of slaves. This last outrage gave character to the war that followed, which was of the most sanguinary and remorseless kind. Samon and his fellows, as every trader was then a soldier also, deposited their merchandise in the camp of the Venedes, and took arms among them as volunteers. The skill and courage of the Franks, their example and exhortations had such influence upon their allies that the war, which had made little progress, soon became formidable, and in the end the Venedes were freed from the yoke of their oppressors. The emancipated people, in gratitude for the assistance of Samon, elected him as their king.

He was still reigning over them in 630, when some of the tribe insulted a company of Frank merchants who had come into their territory, as their sovereign originally came, to barter the productions of France for those of Slavonia. Several of the dealers were killed, others wounded, and their convoy was plundered. No redress could be obtained against the offenders, and the merchants returned home to lay their complaint before Dagobert, who was a liberal encourager of commerce, of manufactures, and of all the arts of peaceful industry. Sichaire was sent ambassador from the king to demand justice from Samon, but the latter refused to receive him for fear of displeasing his people. Sichaire, however, determined to have an audience, assumed the dress of a Venede, and, penetrating to the royal tent, he boldly announced himself and declared his mission. In the heat of the dispute which thereupon arose, the Frank envoy asked Samon "what friendship he thought could exist between servants of God, such as the Franks, and pagan dogs, like the Slavonians?" At this insult the merchant-king, with a dignity which could not have been surpassed by one who had been born a prince, and the patriotism of a native, exclaimed, "If, as thou sayest, we are dogs, it is fit thou shouldst know that we can bite." Sichaire was then driven by the attendants from the king's tent, and ordered to depart from the Slavonian territory, and Samon immediately made preparations to meet the war which he had provoked.



Dagobert took three armies into the field against the foe—the Allemanni, the Lombards and the Austrasians. The two former engaged with and defeated the Slavonians on the sides of the country against which they directed their assaults; but the Austrasians, after maintaining a languid shew of battle for three days, withdrew from the field on the fourth, leaving their tents and baggage in the hands of the enemy. Samon, accordingly, being freed from their presence, and secretly encouraged probably by their emissaries, who made no secret of the disinclination of the Austrasian leudes to the service of Dagobert, entered Thuringia with his host, and ravaged that country and the neighbouring provinces for the space of three years without encountering opposition. It was in vain that the King of the Franks sought to arouse them to a sense of shame, or a thirst for glory; in vain that he appealed for aid to the Saxons, and remitted to them the annual tribute of five hundred cows which had been imposed on them by Clotaire I.;—all were deaf to the voice of Dagobert, and the frontier was left unguarded as if purposely to tempt an invasion. When at last, however, a king was conferred on Austrasia, the leudes at once took arms, the bravery of their followers was restored, and the Venedes were driven back into their own land, and thenceforth held in awe of the adversary.

The new king was Sigebert, the infant son of Dagobert, then not more than three years old, who was inaugurated at Metz, in a general assembly of the nobles, freemen and clergy. His elevation caused great rejoicings among his subjects; but it failed to afford general satisfaction to the Franks. The Neustrians, jealous of the independence of their neighbours, demanded that the king's second son should be given to them for ruler. Dagobert, who had little personal ambition, and desired to pass a peaceful reign, did not long resist the wishes of the people, but appointed Clovis, a child newly borne to him by Queen Nantechilde, to the throne of Neustria and Burgundy. For himself, the king appears to have reserved no territory; but merely retained power and rank as the natural guardian and protector of his children. From his character it is probable that he contemplated, as soon as his sons should be fit to govern for themselves, retiring to some convent and passing his latter days in religious meditation. "He always laboured," says an ancient historian, "under presentiments of approaching death, and pictures of anarchy and misfortune for his family and the Gauls were constantly recurring to his mind." Fredegarius adds that "the king was continually seeking the aid of the saints, against his visible and invisible enemies, hoping that, as the holy martyrs had promised, during his youth, to deliver him from the troubles and dangers which then beset him, they would shield and succour him throughout his life. "An instance of the morbid melancholy and religious gloom with which he was tinctured was furnished at the great assembly of Garches, before the young kings of Austrasia and Neustria, and the leudes and bishops of the two nations. "Hearken to me," he said addressing the multitude, "Oh, kings, my dear sons,—and all you, great and valiant dukes of our realm! Before the coming of that day when the sudden call of death shall remove us hence, it behoves us to take thought for the safety of our souls; in order that, at the end, we may not be found unprepared, and be snatched from the light of heaven to be delivered to eternal darkness and torments. In so far as we are free and masters of our own acts, we ought to employ the perishable goods of this life, to purchase for ourselves, in the tabernacles above, a life everlasting, where in the midst of the just we may find a blessed welcome, and be assured of the recompense of the Lord."

During the continuance, or rather the abeyance, of the war against Samon, Dagobert was occupied with other important political affairs. The Abares, though sufficiently powerful to enslave the Venedes, had no permanent dominion of their own, but were constantly fluctuating between the condition of a vanquished and tributary people, and that of conquerors and oppressors. They had not established the principle of hereditary succession among their chiefs and rulers, but left the sovereign power to be contended for at the death of each, by a troop of rivals and adventurers. The consequence was that almost every new accession produced a revolution; and the people were kept in a state of constant turmoil and revolt. In 630, the Bulgarians, seizing the opportunity afforded by the demise of an Abare monarch,

renounced the yoke to which they had been subjected, and entered upon a gallant but unavailing struggle for independence. They were defeated with great slaughter and reduced to worse than their former thralldom. Nine thousand of their warriors, however, contrived to escape across the frontier and sent to solicit shelter from the Franks. Their envoys were well received by Dagobert, and winter quarters were assigned to the refugees in Bavaria. But the king, a pious catholic, had no love for his guests, who were pagans, and had been accustomed to live by pillage and war rather than industry. The Bavarians too pleaded fear of the wild Bulgarians, and desired their speedy removal. A national council of the Franks was called to deliberate on the course to be pursued towards the strangers; and at its termination a secret order was issued by Dagobert, and the unsuspecting Bulgarians were massacred while they slept. Of the nine thousand men to whom the "most christian king" had extended his nominal hospitality, but seven hundred escaped from the atrocious and deliberate slaughter with which their confidence was rewarded. Alcioc, a chief among the unhappy exiles, rallied around him the feeble remnant of his compatriots, and conducted them safely through the midst of their numerous enemies to the country of the Venedes. It has been said, by a recent English writer, that, during the long period in which the Merovingian princes swayed the destinies of France, the national annals "offer but a succession of barbarism and crime; that, from Clovis to Charles Martel, there existed not a personage worthy of the reader's attention or memory; that there is not recorded an event or anecdote which could excite any feeling save disgust." Unqualified assertions of this kind cannot be wholly true of any period or any nation; but when we see that the mildest and most equitable of the princes referred to, did not scruple to sanction, if not conceive, such an enormity as that above recounted, we feel disposed to admit that, at least, there was not a person or event of the time but derived some taint from the barbarism and lax morality that generally prevailed; and that the age presented a constant succession of sovereigns in whom cruelty and treachery, whatever were their other qualifications, seemed to have become instinctive. Such deeds, however, are certainly worth recording and remembering. Their influence upon society, how rude soever, is felt working beneath the surface, and though it may long lie secretly smouldering there, it bursts at length into flame, and spreads terror and desolation through and beyond its own immediate sphere. The whole history of mankind tends to convince us that no event which lessens the faith and confidence of man in his fellow, which teaches him dissimulation as a means of self-preservation, and hatred and revenge as duties, can be ultimately barren: and, in such cases, the bitterness of the fruit does not, at all times, lessen the value of the harvest.

The next transaction in which Dagobert was engaged was less ignominious. Suintila, king of the Visigoths, having associated with him on the throne, contrary to the custom of his nation, his infant son, Ricimer, had thereby





The Dish of Dagobert.

displeased his subjects, and created among his nobles much secret hostility to his government. Sisenand, one of the most powerful of the Spanish chiefs, took advantage of the growing discontent to form a conspiracy for the purpose of dethroning Suintila, and transferring the crown to his own head. He was soon enabled to create a strong party among his compeers, and even to obtain a promise of support from Dagobert, who, immediately his project was ripe for execution, sent to him a body of troops from Aquitaine, under the command of the Dukes Abundantius and Venerandus; and shortly afterwards he put in motion the army of Burgundy to support them. Of the assistance of the latter, however, there was no need. Scarcely had Abundantius and Venerandus reached Zaragossa, when it was ascertained that Suintila had been abandoned by the whole of his court and soldiers, and Sisenand proclaimed king in his stead. The Franks therefore returned, laden with presents, towards the Pyrenees, without having drawn a sword. An incident connected with this easy triumph nevertheless, went nigh to disturb the amicable relations between the new allies. In the treaty entered into between Dagobert and Sisenand, it had been stipulated that, if the latter should attain the crown he sought, he should present to his auxiliary a celebrated bowl or dish of gold, which had been given to Torrismond, the son of Theodoric, by the Roman Patrician Ætius, after the battle fought against Attila the Hun, at Châlons. This dish is said to have weighed five hundred pounds, was set with diamonds and precious stones, and had been hitherto preserved as one of the most sacred of the national treasures; not more for its own value and beauty than for the traditions which hallowed it in the recollection of the Visigoths. Sisenand, notwithstanding the opposition he experienced from his chiefs and people, performed his promise, and delivered the relic to the Frank generals; but the Spaniards could not endure to be deprived of this trophy of their former prowess, and concerting measures for its rescue, formed a strong band to waylay the bearers of the dish at one of the mountain passes; and repossessed themselves of it by force. Dagobert demanded its restoration, and, this being refused, threatened to send an army into Spain to desolate the country; till finding from the obstinate determination of the Visigoths that war alone could wrest their treasure from them, he at last consented to accept, in lieu of the dish, two hundred thousand pennies in gold—a sum estimated by Father Daniel at one million six hundred thousand *livres* of the money of his time [Anno 1690], or nearly one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling of present value. These negotiations were concluded in 631.

Abundantius and Venerandus, who led the Aquitanians to the invasion of Spain, are believed to have been the guardians or tutors of Boggis and Bertrand, the two sons of Caribert, who, dying in the third year of his reign, had left his throne to his children, under the suzerainty and guarantee of Dagobert for their succession. The latter, however, appears to have assumed the absolute authority of sovereign, and, though he employed the troops of

Aquitaine in his expedition, he claimed the reward of their services for himself. This usurpation aroused the anger of Amandus, Duke of the Gascons, and father of Gisèle, the widow of Caribert, who, after vainly demanding the custody of the young prince for himself, assembled [636] an army to enforce his claims to the regency by arms. He passed the Garonne with a strong body of mountaineers, and sought to animate the people of Aquitaine, by proclaiming the independance of the nation, which it was intended, he said, to bring once more under subjection to the Franks. The call to war, however, was not so hastily or generally responded to on this, as on former occasions of the same kind. The rule of Dagobert had inflicted upon the people no hardships or severities; their laws and customs were respected, and their princes were thought to be as safe under the protection of the Frank sovereign, their uncle, as under the Gascon Duke, their grandfather; while, from the ambition and comparative poverty of the latter, much more was to be feared than from Dagobert. Poitiers and some other cities and towns, nevertheless, declared in favour of Amandus, and insurrection was gradually spreading through the realm, when the project was nipped in the bud by the promptitude of the suzerain. Dagobert summoned a general muster of his leudes from all parts of France, and his call was obeyed by no less than ten Dukes, each at the head of a formidable army. These, under the supreme command of the Referendary Chadoinde, a Burgundian of approved talent and discretion, to whom the victories of Thierry over his brother Theodebert, at Toul and Tolbiac, are believed to have been owing, advanced with all haste into Aquitaine. Poitiers was taken by assault, and pillaged; and the same fortune awaited the other revolted towns; till the Gascons, finding no longer a refuge in the country they had invaded, retreated precipitately towards their own mountains, and endeavoured to shelter themselves amid inaccessible heights, and in the depths of remote glens and valleys. They were pursued, however, even into these fastnesses, attacked in isolated bands, and compelled eventually to submit to the hard terms dictated by the conquerors. In one only effort against the enemy were they successful—their resistance to the force of Duke Arembert, whose followers were routed, and nearly all destroyed in the valley of Soule.

Dagobert received news of the success of his expedition at Clichy, and his triumph seems to have revived within him the old warlike spirit of his ancestors. Instead of disbanding his troops, as was customary at the termination of every war, he sent orders to Chadoinde to march upon Britany, the inhabitants of which still refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Franks, or to pay them tribute; and whose predatory bands descended from time to time to the plains of Neustria and Aquitaine, plundering and laying waste the whole country. The threat of invasion, and the knowledge of the vast army on foot to carry it into effect, terrified the Bretons into submission; and Judicaël, their king, under the prudent council of the celebrated St. Eloi, set out with a splendid retinue for Clichy to implore the

pardon and favour of the Frank king. Dagobert received him graciously, accepted his renunciation of the royal title, and conferred on him that of Count, which had long before been agreed upon, in the treaties between the two nations, as the designation of the Breton chiefs; and, after loading him with presents, permitted him to return to his own country to resume the government. It is related as an evidence of the simplicity of manners of this prince, that though invited at a banquet to seat himself at the table of the king, he chose rather to partake the frugal meal of the chancellor Dadon, archbishop of Rouen, subsequently canonised by the pope, at St. Ouen. This shew of abstinence, however, is as likely to have resulted from policy as from preference, since Dagobert affected humility in his own person, and encouraged and rewarded its exhibition in others; though, at the same time, it cannot be denied that the Bretons were always much less ostentatious in their tastes and manners than the people of the neighbouring provinces.

The success of Judicaël prompted the Gascon chiefs to pursue a similar course; but they did not approach the palace of Clichy without fear for the doom which might there await them; and ere they reached the gates of the royal residence, they were seized with panic and fled for shelter to the neighbouring church of St. Denis, whence they could not be tempted to stir again till the king had granted them a safe-conduct. Dagobert accepted the



submission of the mountaineers, who preserved the peace they were sworn to maintain during his life; but immediately after his death they renewed the attempt to establish their independence.

Dagobert died at Clichy on the 19th of January 638, and was buried in

the abbey of St. Denis, which, favoured by its proximity to the palace, had already grown into importance, and thenceforth shared with the churches of St. Germain-des-Prés and St. Geneviève the honours derived from containing the sepulchres of the kings. This was the last prince of the Merovingian race who truly deserved the title of sovereign. He possessed not merely the pomp and name of a king but the power, and exercised a more extended sway over his turbulent nobles than any of his predecessors for at least the preceding half century. In the popular traditions—no unworthy testimony in such cases—his name is honoured as a friend to the injured and oppressed, and as a just and merciful man; but among ecclesiastical writers, he bears the reproach of having led a life of excessive debauchery. He had three legitimate wives, and kept a troop of mistresses, who are said to have consumed among them well nigh all his revenue. Incontinence, however, was not a new vice among the Frank kings. From the reign of Clovis to the time of Charlemagne, polygamy was practised by all who had the means of maintaining a large household; and no contemporary seems to have regarded the custom as opposed to morality or religion. Samon, King of the Venedes, who was under the necessity of paying the utmost deference to the opinions of his subjects, had more than twelve wives. The accusation by the clergy was brought forward in more recent times, and rather, it has been hinted, because the king had no respect for the abuse of clerical functions, and retarded the accumulation of ecclesiastical wealth and power, than because his conduct gave offence in his generation, by its disregard to the holy ordinances of the church. The historian of the miracles of the abbey of St. Martin of Verteuil has thrown some light upon this subject. “King Dagobert,” he says, “being harassed by the multiplied events of constant warfare, took many things from the monasteries of the saints to bestow upon his men of war; yielding in this presumptuous matter to the counsels of Centulfe, one of the leudes of his palace, a man of much art and power of persuasion. And the king having ordained that Centulfe should himself put his counsel in execution, he commenced by taking note of the possessions of the sacred places, and entered them in the fiscal tables, to the end that a moiety of them might be taken away.”

The two sons of Dagobert, Sigebert and Clovis, were still too young, at the death of their father, to conduct the government of their respective realms, and consequently the Mayors of the palace; whose influence had been diminished of late, resumed their high functions of presiding ministers. From this period the Merovingian dynasty visibly declined towards its fall. The name of the king continued to be used in all public acts, but his authority was limited to sanctioning the decrees of a minister; who must have been more or less than man to have resisted the temptation thus offered of acquiring for himself and his family the rank as well as the power of which he was the sole instrument. Everything seemed to favour the growth and maturing of such ambition. The wars and conquests of the Long-haired princes had

brought under their sceptre many races of people, with their princes and chiefs, who had no regard for the memory of Clovis, nor attachment to his descendants—whose military glory indeed, instead of shedding a lustre on their names, as on the name of the Salian Franks, reminded them of the loss of independence and renown. The princes themselves, through the licentiousness of their forefathers, had degenerated, both physically and intellectually; and instead of leading their armies to victory as formerly, they were compelled to entrust the command to braver and abler chiefs, reserving to themselves the privilege of declaring peace and war, of making treaties, and appropriating to their own use a large share of the spoils taken in battle. Moreover the feudal system had sprung into being; and, although still in its infancy, it had already effected a considerable change in the habits and feelings of the people. The nobles were no longer wholly dependant on the court for their rank and property, but had established themselves in their castles and fortresses, assembled around them a number of freemen, who, not being proprietors of land, were attached to and formed the retinue and court of the feudal seigneur: and the surrounding domain was cultivated by serfs and bond-tenants, ready at all times to do the bidding of their superior, for a promise of freedom, of some additional privilege, or a reward to be paid by an abatement of rent or vassal-service, or in pillage. The right of hereditary property had been recognised, at least as regards the larger estates; and this contributed greatly to wean the possessors of fiefs from the original lord; for to these fiefs were annexed prerogatives little inferior to those of the sovereign; and it was the interest of the king to repress, and of the feudatories to extend, their power and privileges. A constant jealousy was thus kept up between the king and his nobles, and the latter took advantage of every occasion to lessen the capacity of the former to resume the dominion which he had gradually lost. The Mayors of the palace too were selected from among the leudes themselves, and, being holders of large fiefs, their interests were identical with those of their peers, among whom they consequently had friends and partisans, even when the name of the king was rendered obnoxious by some act of tyranny originating from themselves.

Pepin de Landen, or the old, who was Mayor of Austrasia, continued after Dagobert's death to govern the country in the name of the boy Sigebert, but in reality with regal powers; and Clovis, king of Neustria and Burgundy, remained under the tutelage of Ega, Mayor of the palace, and of Nantéchilde his mother, who had the name of regent. The reign of these feeble monarchs—if the title can be justly given to them—offers little of importance, and all the recorded transactions of the period betoken the general change and transition that were in progress. The aristocracy was constantly struggling against royalty, the church against the king and nobles—each rank and order aiming at a separate and complete independence; each in turn wresting some concession from the weakness of its opponent, and each compelled to give way again the moment its position was reversed. To trace the course of political

events it is only necessary to notice that Pepin died in 640, and was succeeded in his office by his son Grimoald, in whose family the mayoralty thenceforth became hereditary.

There had been no Mayor of the palace in Burgundy since the middle of the reign of Dagobert. Queen Nantéchilde thought it necessary to the authority of her son to establish one there; and sent Flaochat to Châlons to assume the vacant presidency; but Willibald the Patrician, who had long performed the functions of chief minister, was unwilling to relinquish his post, and entered into confederacy with a great portion of the leudes to oppose the accession of the stranger. Flaochat was compelled to have recourse to arms to obtain obedience from the turbulent Burgundians, and though Willibald was defeated in the field, the mayor was not permitted to enjoy his high place. A few days after his triumph he was assassinated, and Burgundy continued to be governed, under the direction of its national council, rather as a republic than a kingdom.

In Germany, meanwhile, the tribes which had formed alliances with, or were tributary to the Franks, sought to rid themselves of a domination which was tottering even in its birth-place. From the date of its conquest by Thierry I., Thuringia had always been held as a province of Austrasia, and its governors had been named by the French kings. Dagobert, for defence of the frontiers against the Venedes, then engaged in the war of Samon, concerning the pillage of the Frank merchants, had created Radulfe Duke of Thuringia, with all the powers appertaining to that high military appointment. The ambition of the chief was fired by what he saw of the state of the country, and the weakness of his master; and when the war was ended he refused to acknowledge the authority of Sigebert, to receive his ordinances, or to yield him tribute. An army was sent into Thuringia [640] to reduce him to obedience; but, relying on the good understanding he had established with the Austrasian leudes, he opposed force to force, and when driven from the field, shut himself up in a strong fortress on the banks of the river Unstrut, with his family and the best of his troops. The Austrasians, instead of pressing the siege, encamped near the walls, and wasted in idle disputes the time of action; some of their chiefs urging that the assault should be immediately attempted, and others demanding a delay till some unexpected reinforcements should arrive. At last, as neither party would yield to the other, the castle was attacked by an inadequate force, which being unable to carry the fortifications, retired from the struggle, and the expedition fell to the ground. The Franks it is said had taken an oath, in the forest of Buconia, on the confines of Thuringia, to give no quarter to the rebels. Their ill-will to the errand on which they had been sent however was stronger than their religious scruples; and part of Germany was permitted thus easily to recover its independence.

Sigebert died in 650, and his death was the signal for a premature revolution. Grimoald, the son of Pepin, whose accession as Mayor of the

palace has been already noticed, had formed so many strong ties of kindred and friendship among the leudes, and had so exercised his authority towards the gaining of partisans, that he deemed himself sufficiently powerful to set aside the royal line at the death of the young king, and to place his own son Childebert, then a child of seven years old, on the throne. Dagobert, son of Sigebert, was secretly disposed of in order to make room for this change of dynasty. His long hair was cut off, and he was sent under the conduct of Didon, bishop of Poitiers, to a monastery in Ireland, while a report was spread abroad of his death. But Grimoald had in this instance miscalculated his own influence and the apathy of his countrymen. The Austrasians, however indisposed to the Merovingians, were not prepared to accept as sovereign the child of a minister who had betrayed his trust; and, when the new king was proclaimed, they rose in revolt against him, attacked and ransacked the palace, and delivered the Mayor and young Childebert together into the hands of the King of Neustria, who sent them prisoners to Paris, and caused them both to be put to death. Clovis himself died about six years afterwards, namely in 656—leaving three children of very tender age to inherit his realm. These were Clotaire III., Childeric II., and Thierry III.

Notwithstanding the knowledge which might have been derived from the attempt of Grimoald concerning the views of the Mayors, those officers were still permitted to retain their dangerous power, and left to strengthen their hands for future opportunities. Even the family of Pepin appears to have maintained its influence, if not its position, in Austrasia, while in Neustria, Ega was succeeded by Erchinoald, or Archambaud, who was invested with an authority still more absolute than that of his predecessor. Clotaire III. was proclaimed King of Neustria on the death of his father; but Burgundy and Austrasia remained without acknowledged monarchs till the death of Clotaire, which happened about four years after his accession, and during the mayoralty of Ebroin, who had succeeded Erchinoald. Ebroin then called Thierry III. to the throne; but the Austrasians would not submit to be thus held in even nominal subjection to what they considered an inferior State; and compelled the mayor to send Childeric II. to reign at Metz, under the patronage or direction of Vulfoad, duke of Champagne. Burgundy soon afterwards revolted against Ebroin and the king of his nomination, and united itself, under the direction of Léger, bishop of Autun, with Austrasia. The cause of this revolution is stated to have been the haughtiness and arbitrary conduct of Ebroin; who, on some offence, had forbidden the Burgundian nobles to appear at the court of Neustria. The indignant leudes, in their resentment of this insolence, not only made war against him, but burnt the houses and destroyed the property of all who refused to take part with them in opposition to his government; and at length, when they captured him in a church where he had taken sanctuary, they cut off his hair, and placed him as a prisoner in the monastery of Luxeuil. Thierry himself consented to become a monk, and passed from his throne to a cell in the abbey of St. Denis.

Austrasia and Burgundy having thus acquired ascendancy over Neustria, do not appear formally to have assumed dominion over that realm, but left it still to the government of Ebroin, as an independant kingdom, though without a sovereign. Childeric II., meanwhile, submitted to the exigencies which had called him to bear the burden of a crown. He sanctioned the abrogation demanded by the leudes of all the acts of Ebroin, confirmed the grants of his predecessors, and decreed that the dukes, the counts and the royal judges should conform themselves, in their respective governments, to the local laws and customs—customs and laws, it may be added, which in most cases were of little advantage to the people, but which conferred sovereign power upon the holders of fiefs. Thus everything tended to advance the feudal system, and to render the great vassals independent of the suzerain. It is doubtful however whether Childeric willingly assented to what had been forced from him by circumstances. At a later period of his reign there are traces of a struggle with his leudes, which is believed to have been for the maintenance of the royal authority. Léger, the leader of the Burgundian malcontents, having fallen into the king's displeasure, was summoned, at the festival of Easter 673, to Autun, to answer an accusation of treason, brought against him by a monk of St. Symphorien. From some cause—probably the haughty remarks of the prelate in his sermon—the king's rage was so excited, that on Good Friday he was on the point of slaying the bishop with his own hand. Childeric passed Easter-night in the monastery of St. Symphorien, and in the morning, transported with fury, he entered the cathedral, where Léger was officiating at the altar, and with loud and unseemly cries called upon him to come forth. The bishop, however, continued the service, without betraying any signs of apprehension, and at its close went straight to the royal apartments to confront his enemy. His undaunted conduct and bold aspect overawed the king, and the bishop escaped with life; but not without being deprived of his power and liberty. He was sent to Luxeuil and immured in prison with his old adversary Ebroin.

Whether, as has been surmised, the attack upon Léger was directed as much against the leudes as against the bishop, or not, it is certain that shortly afterwards the former took ample revenge. Childeric being, in the course of the year, at Chelles, caused a noble, named Bodilon, to be tied to a stake and publicly beaten with rods for some offence which has not been stated. A few days afterwards, as he was travelling near Chelles in the forest of Leuconia (Bondy), with his queen, who was then pregnant, and his two sons, the royal party were set upon by Bodilon and a number of his friends and followers, and all of them, except the second son, who escaped from the assassins unperceived, were massacred on the spot.

This murder was the signal for a general outburst among the turbulent throughout the entire realm of France, and a scene of rapine and confusion ensued such as had not been witnessed since the invasion of Attila. "All who had been subjected," says the author of the 'Life of St. Léger,' to the



violence of the late king, now filled the provinces with murder and brigandage." The governors, regardless of all save their individual interests, increased the disorder of the times by their extortion and tyranny, and made war upon each other for the sake of pillage or the extension of their power. Theft, rape, slaughter, every crime that was cruel, base and revolting, was perpetrated with impunity by men whose passions were freed from the restraints of the law, and who had been brutalized by a long course of oppression and the sight of triumphant iniquity. Terror reigned everywhere, and made all men selfish and savage. The land was scantily cultivated, for none could be certain that he should reap the harvest he had prepared; and the towns were shut up as fortresses to preserve them from the wandering bands of outlaws which spread over the country, carrying plunder and devastation wherever they came. Ebroin and Léger, in the midst of this terrible strife, appeared once more upon the scene, to guide and direct the storm rather than lend their powerful aid to appease it. They had become reconciled in the solitude of the cloister, but finding themselves free again, their former hostility returned, and each took a different part in the general struggle. The deposed king, Thierry III., also left his cell, and threw himself as a brand into the midst of the flame. His regal locks had grown in his retirement, and when he appeared among the leudes of his brother Childeric, he was immediately

recognised, and a number of them hoisted his standard, proclaimed him king, and accompanied him, to resume his royal state, to the palace of St. Cloud.

Ebroin, who desired to repossess himself of the government as Mayor of the palace, brought forward at this juncture a pretended son of Clotaire III., under whose auspices he hoped to reign without question; but the leudes despised this phantom king, and refused to support his pretensions; and he consequently sunk at once into obscurity, and disappeared almost as suddenly as he had arisen. The contest for power, however, was not yet at an end. Léger had ranged himself under the banners of Thierry, and by his example, and the force of his arguments and influence upon the people, he was enabled to collect a strong force against Ebroin. The latter, accordingly despatched a body of troops under the command of the bishop of Châlons to seize the good prelate of Autun; and eventually Léger was surrounded at Féchamp, compelled to surrender, and had his head struck off by his rival. For his services in behalf of the people, Léger was subsequently regarded by them as a martyr, and after having been canonised for many years in their remembrance, his name was enrolled in the calendar of saints by the Pope.

Ebroin, nevertheless, though triumphant for a time, was unable permanently to retain his position. His cruelty and arbitrary conduct, the result of his own fears, rendered those who had been at first opposed to his rule more obstinate in their opposition, and gradually estranged those who had been his partisans. While he was engaged in an attempt to subdue the Burgundians, Dagobert, who, under the reign of Chilperic, had returned from his exile in Ireland, and been established in a small kingdom on the banks of the Rhine, the ancient territory of the Ripuarian Franks, was unexpectedly proclaimed king by the Austrasians; but his reign was of brief duration. He was assassinated by his turbulent subjects, during a hunting excursion; and the prevailing confusion became worse confounded. Yet the murder of Dagobert availed nothing to Ebroin. The conspiracy of the Austrasians was not in his favour, but in that of the family of Pepin, count or duke of Heristal, which since the death of Brunehaut had governed with almost absolute power at Metz, and whose ambitious designs had been prematurely disclosed by Grimoald in the elevation of his son. Since the failure of that attempt, however, all obstacles had been removed. The royal house of Clovis was nearly extinct; and the Austrasians, by constant intermixture with the Franks from beyond the Rhine, with the Saxons, and other German tribes had daily lost some of their old predilections, and grown more anxious for the re-establishment of order in their territory than for the preservation of any particular line of kings. Martin and Pepin, therefore, descendants of the Mayor of the palace to Dagobert I. were, in 679, recognised by their countrymen as chiefs, without however changing their ducal titles for those of kings.

Ebroin meanwhile, who continued to govern in Neustria, declared war against the brothers and defeated them [680] at Latafao, but without obtaining any signal advantage from his victory. He did not limit his efforts, however,

to open warfare, but had recourse to the steel of the assassin, under whose blows Duke Martin fell in 681. This crime nevertheless did not escape punishment. Ebroin himself was shortly afterwards [682] attacked and slain by a Frank named Hermanfrid, whom he had sought to deprive of the estates which he held under the grants of former sovereigns, and who, having gathered a trusty band of followers, beset his house by night, captured and killed him, and fled for safety to Duke Pepin in Austrasia. The death of Ebroin, though it did not put an end to the disturbances by which Neustria was rent, deprived that country of all hope of supremacy over the neighbouring realms, and left to Pepin a free field for his ambition.

"Hostilities," says an old historian, "continued after the death of Ebroin, but they were no longer of a character to disquiet Pepin, whose partisans daily increased by crowds of Neustrian nobles who came to join him. They felt that it was not alone a question between Neustria and Austrasia, but that the fortunes of the whole nation were involved in the struggle." It is true that Thierry III., was nominally king of Neustria, but he, it was well known, was a mere instrument in the hands of the leudes, who made use of his name only to give a legal colouring to their own proceedings; and Pepin, in resorting to arms, urged the same plea as was put forward by his adversaries, namely,—that it was in behalf of the king.

The war soon assumed a decided character. Pepin, having strengthened himself on all sides, proceeded with an immense army across the frontier, determined, by a general engagement, to put an end to the anarchy that prevailed. Thierry and Berthaire, who had succeeded Ebroin as Mayor of Neustria, met him with their followers [687], at a place called Testricum (Testry) in Vermandois, where, after a fierce conflict, the Austrasians remained masters of the field. Thierry and Berthaire with their followers took to flight, and being pursued, the king was taken prisoner, his palace was plundered, and his treasures were parted among his captors. Berthaire, it is said, was killed by his own soldiers, while Thierry was transported to Metz to sustain the character of a veritable *Roi fainéant*, under the governance and control of his conqueror, who now assumed dominion over the whole of France.

It has been usual, and is certainly convenient, to close with this period the History of the Merovingian dynasty, and to commence that of the Carolingians; for although Thierry and several succeeding princes of his family continued nominally to wield the sceptre, the real powers of monarchy were thenceforth vested in the Mayors of the palace. Before proceeding, therefore, to relate the transactions of Pepin, subsequently to the battle of Testry, it will not be improper to give a brief summary of the progress and condition of the French nation from the time of Clovis to the year 687—the space over which the narrative contained in this chapter has extended.

The national religion occupies the most prominent place, both from its own importance, and the influence it exerted upon the manners of the people, and the character of the age. Christianity itself was never perhaps more

degraded by its professors than during the two first centuries after the conversion of Clovis. The church maintained an incessant struggle for power and wealth, and in order to render itself independent of temporal authority—over which, indeed, it asserted its own supremacy. It was split into petty factions, and was rent by schisms, the violence of which kept up an uninterrupted succession of martyrs and saints—Catholics, Arians, Pelagians and others, whose very names and tenets now form subjects of bitter controversy among antiquaries. The clergy of the earliest ages maintained themselves partly by manual labour, and partly by the voluntary contributions of the devout; but, as they were the directors of their disciples' conscience, had to fix the nature and amount of all atonements, and were generally consulted at the making of wills, they soon contrived to dispense with manual exertion, and confined their efforts to spiritual affairs. The donations and legacies of the faithful increased in value in proportion to the increase of superstition and crime, and to the greater weight which the priests acquired by the growth of their riches, and the grants from kings and princes of church lands and possessions; and eventually a claim was set up for tithes, which, according to the records of the Council of Maçon, held in 585, were to be paid "conformably to the laws of God and the immemorial custom of Christians." At first their payment appears to have been voluntary, and in order to induce the constant attendance at divine service of an efficient minister. The instructions of Pope Gregory to Augustine for the regulation of the clergy whom he took with him into Britain has no reference to tithes, as such, but includes them under the general name of oblations. "It is the custom of the Apostolic See," said the pontiff, "to charge bishops when they are ordained that the whole income be divided into four parts;—the first for the bishop and his family, that he may be able to keep hospitality; the second for the clergy; the third for the poor; and the fourth for the repairing of churches.... In the infancy of the church no man said that aught he possessed was his own, but the clergy had all things in common. If there be any of the inferior clergy who cannot contain, let them marry, and receive their dividend apart from the rest, for so it was also among our fathers, as it is written, 'Division was made to all, as every one had need.' Provision must be made for their subsistence, and they must be kept under the ecclesiastical rule." When tithes, however, were demanded under the sanction of law, a somewhat different division to that enjoined by Gregory was adopted. The first share was set apart for the ornaments of the church; the second was distributed to the poor and strangers, and the third was reserved for the clergy. The course of clerical encroachment had already commenced. The offerings made at the altar, at festivals, and even on ordinary occasions, together with the money paid for masses, and for proxies to perform penance—for this abuse had crept into the church at no remote date after its institution—formed a considerable portion of the ecclesiastical revenues, and enabled the clergy always to have the command of a strong body of partisans among the people, through their liberal distributions of alms, and their large rewards

for services. The warlike manners of many of the Frank church dignitaries have been already spoken of.

Monastic orders are believed to have been introduced into France by Martin of Tours, at the monastery bearing his name, in the year 360. The institution took root instantly, and soon became popular, insomuch that at the death of Martin, according to the author of his life, in the 'Literary History of France,' two thousand monks attended his funeral. At the end of the fifth century, monasteries, both of monks and nuns, had been founded in every district of the kingdom, and had grown at once wealthy and dissolute. The regulations of these establishments, had they been attended to, were extremely strict. Neither the abbot, prior, or other head of a monastic establishment, nor a brother was allowed to possess property, but all things were in common among them. None were allowed servants or attendants, or a place of concealment for goods of any kind; neither chest, drawer, press, or other repository. Each had a separate bed, but the dormitory was an open chamber in which about twenty persons reposed. Every one was compelled to be present, unless excused by sickness or infirmity, at each of the numerous services enjoined by the church. Every one was required to work for four hours in the morning, and to read for two. The frugal dinner was served at twelve, an interval of repose was allowed till half-past one, and then each laboured for three hours more. During September and October, Monday Wednesday and Friday were fast days. From the 1st of November till Christmas, and seven days before Epiphany, were daily fasts, except on Saturdays. From Epiphany to Lent, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday continued to be fasts, and the season of abstinence extended throughout Lent. The allowance of food to each was a pound (twelve ounces) of bread, besides fish, when permitted to be used, boiled grain, vegetables, milk, cheese and butter, and about two English pints of wine per diem. No butcher's meat or fowls were allowed, except to the sick and infirm. Each in turn was cook; and all were allowed to partake the fruits produced in the garden. A cowl, a coat and scapulary, or light cloak of woollen cloth, manufactured and made by themselves, was the usual dress of the monastic orders; each of the members of which was furnished with a handkerchief, a knife, needle, pen, pencil and tablet. The sick were allowed a change of dress, with somewhat better bedding than the hale, who slept on straw mattresses and bolsters, furnished with blanket and coverlet. No amusement was permitted to the professed; nor could they receive visits, presents or letters, or go without the walls of the monastery, but by permission of the superior. A porter, of suitable age and gravity, had constant charge of the gate; and within the walls were usually a good supply of water, gardens for fruit and vegetables, a bakehouse, and frequently a mill and other requisites. Hospitality to strangers was always liberally manifested by the monasteries, but none of the monks, save him whose duty it was to attend the guests, was permitted to speak to strangers. The produce of the labour of the monks was sold to the public,

and usually fetched a good price, and was a source of no inconsiderable income. Relics, discovered and manufactured, were also brought to good account in augmenting the monastic revenues. Bones, bits of coffins, hair, toe and finger nails, and fragments of clothing, that had belonged to or been used by the saints, were especially valuable.

In his 'Ecclesiastical History,' Fleury has given a specimen of the manner in which relics were multiplied. Pope Gregory I. writing in 594 to the Empress, at Constantinople, who had desired to have the body or part of the body of St. Paul, alleges as an excuse for denying her request, that "The bodies of the Apostles Paul and Peter are so terrible by their miracles, that there is reason to apprehend danger even in approaching to pray to them;" and, after adducing as an instance, that his predecessor in the pontifical chair had died in consequence of merely approaching within the distance of fifteen feet, to make an alteration in a silver ornament on the body of St. Peter, and other instances in which several monks and workmen perished in consequence of going too nigh to the bodies of St. Paul and St. Lawrence, adds, "The Romans in granting relics do not touch the saints' bodies; they only put a little linen in a box, which they place near them. After some time they withdraw it, and deposit the box and linen solemnly in the church which they mean to dedicate. This linen performs as many miracles as if they had transported the real body. In the time of Pope Leo, some Greeks, doubting the virtue of such relics, took a pair of scissars and cut the linen, when forthwith the blood flowed from it." He further adds that, "he would send her a few grains of the chain which had been on Paul's neck and hands, and which had been found peculiarly efficacious, provided they succeeded, which sometimes they did not, in filing them off."

The relics found among Arians were tried by fire, and, if consumed in the flames, they were reckoned spurious. Great sanctity was attached to these relics by all classes of persons. Kings and princes usually carried some about with them, especially in times of war, in order that, at the ratification of treaties of peace or alliance, the cession of territory, or close of other important transactions, the parties might be more efficiently bound to the observance of their contracts. Sometimes, indeed, relics were concealed at the time of making oaths, which on almost every occurrence were deemed necessary, and at the end of the formulæ the sacred fragments were exposed to view in order to impart greater solemnity to the obligation. True religion, nevertheless, gained little from monachism or from relics. Ceremony was more regarded than essentials, and ceremony was, in fact, necessary to the promulgation of the faith. The barbarous tribes of Germany and Gaul, had alike been accustomed to look upon prescribed forms and spectacles with awe, and Christianity would have made little progress among them if it had failed to operate on their senses and imagination as strongly as the religions which its ministers sought to uproot.

The endeavour to separate the church from the State, to which reference

has been made, has been traced to its causes by M. Guizot, who says that the clergy were for a long period in constant danger, from the brutality and recklessness of the leudes and laity in general, and frequently became victims to their rapacity and barbarism. "As a means of defence, the church proclaimed a principle formerly asserted, although more indefinitely, under the Empire, namely, the separation of temporal from spiritual power, and their reciprocal independence. By the aid of this principle, the church continued unmolested by the barbarians. It maintained that force could have no effect to controul a system of religious articles, hopes and promises; and therefore that the temporal world ought to be completely severed from the spiritual." From independence the church endeavoured to pass to dominion. From asserting freedom for its own doctrines, it assumed the power to impose those doctrines upon all mankind; and from doctrinal matters it aspired to the supreme sovereignty of the world. These extravagant pretensions however had not been fully developed at the accession of Pepin; the subject therefore will be noticed in its proper place. To the exemption of ecclesiastics from the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals it is only necessary here to advert.

The right of sanctuary was an early and important privilege conferred upon the shrines of martyrs and Saints. It protected debtors from immediate seizure and sale as slaves, by their creditors; and, according to the records of the abbey of St. Cuthbert, at Durham, in England—the regulations in these respects being uniform throughout the Catholic world—it afforded refuge to "all manner of men that committed any great offence,—as killing of a man in his own defence, or any prisoners that had broken out of prison, and fled to the church door, knocking to have it opened. Certain men lay in two chambers over the north door for that purpose, that, when any such offender came and knocked, they instantly let them in at any hour of the night, and ran quickly to the galilee-bell and tolled it, that whosoever heard it might know that some had taken sanctuary. When the prior had notice thereof, he sent orders to keep themselves within the sanctuary; that is, within the church and churchyard, and that every one should have a gown of black cloth with a yellow cross, called St. Cuthbert's cross, at the left shoulder, that every one might see the privilege granted to St. Cuthbert's shrine, for offenders to fly unto for succour and safeguard of their lives, till they could obtain the prince's pardon. And that they should be within the church or sanctuary on a grate, made only for that purpose, adjoining to the galilee south door. They had meat, drink, bedding and other necessities at the cost of the house for thirty-seven days, being only such as were necessary for such offenders, until the prior and convent could get them conveyed out of the diocese." Of the degenerate manners of some of the early clergy some curious notices are preserved in the ancient canons. One made at the council held as early as 367, at Laodicea, ordains that "If any bishop, priest or deacon, spend his time in dicing and drinking, he shall either desist or be deposed; and that

a subdeacon, reader or singer, shall be suspended from communion." Other offences, such as lascivious songs and conversation, and being present at scenes of intemperance and lewdness, were prohibited under similar penalties.

The general character of the Frankish princes and clergy resembled, indeed, that which Gildas assigns to the same classes in British History, at the same period, and which John Milton, in his account of the Britons and Anglo-Saxons, has so forcibly rendered. "Their kings were foully degenerated to all tyranny and vicious life. They avenge and they protect, not the innocent but the guilty. They swear oft, but perjure. They wage war, but civil and unjust war. They punish rigorously them that rob by the highway; but those grand robbers that sit with them at table they honour and reward. They give alms largely, but in the face of their alms-deeds, pile up wickedness, to a far higher heap. They sit in the judgment-seat, but go seldom by the rule of right; neglecting, and proudly overlooking the modest and harmless; but countenancing the audacious, though guilty of abominablest crimes. They stuff their prisons, but with men committed rather by circumvention than any just cause.

"Nothing better were the clergy, but at the same pass, or rather worse; unlearned, unapprehensive yet impudent; subtle prowlers,—pastors in name, but indeed wolves; intent upon all occasions, not to feed the flock, but to pamper and well line themselves. Not called, but seizing on the Ministry as a trade, not as a spiritual charge. Teaching the people, not by sound doctrine, but by evil example. Usurping the chair of Peter, but, through the blindness of their own worldly lusts, they stumble upon the seat of Judas. Deadly haters of truth, broachers of lies, looking on the poor christian with eyes of pride and contempt; but fawning on the wickedest rich men without shame. Great promoters of other men's alms with their set exhortations, but themselves contributing ever least. Slightly touching the many vices of the age, but preaching without end their own grievances as done to Christ. Seekers after degrees and preferments in the church, more than after heaven; and, so gained, make it their whole study how to keep them by any tyranny. Yet, lest they should be thought things of no use in their eminent places, they have their niceties and trivial points, to keep in awe the superstitious multitude; but in true saving knowledge leave them still as gross and stupid as themselves. Bunglers at the scripture, nay forbidding and silencing them that know, but in worldly matters, practised and cunning shifters; in that only art and simony, great clerks and masters, bearing their heads high, but their thoughts abject and low. Gluttonous, incontinent and daily drunkards. And what shouldst thou expect from these poor laity, these beasts, all belly? Shall these amend thee, who are themselves laborious in evil doings? . . . Are all thus? perhaps not all, or not so grossly. But what availed it Eli to be himself blameless, while he connived at others that were abominable? Who of them hath been envied for his better life? Who of them hated to consort with these, or withstood their entering the ministry, or endeavoured zealously their casting out?"

The secular institutions of the Franks, except that they had imbibed more of the spirit of the feudal system, had undergone no material change from the time of Clovis. Under the Salic laws, which were revised by the last named monarch, females were incapable of inheriting lands, because they were incapable of performing the military services which were imposed upon the holders of estates. They might possess moveables of every description, and parents might assign to their daughters, or husbands to their wives, the rents or proceeds of land for dower; but these burdens could only be imposed upon free lands; it being a maxim of law with regard to the others, that, "they could not pass from the lance to the distaff." The tenures were those called allodial, or free, which are believed to have been the allotments made upon conquest, and beneficiary, which were subject to obligations imposed by a superior, whether prince or subject. The beneficiaries formed the class called leudes, who, at their elevation to that rank, were each presented with a war-horse and a sword. The privileges of these leudes may be estimated from the fact, that they could even take an oath by proxy, and could not be compelled to do so in person; that they were not accountable for crimes committed by them to the courts which judged the people, but were amenable to a court of their own—the court of peers. The first benefice created is said to have been that bestowed by Clovis upon Aurelian, for his success in negotiating the marriage between the king and Clotilda, in the year 493. Illegitimate sons were not excluded from inheritance, but came in among the rest for their share, provided they had been acknowledged as part of his family, by the father. In war, besides furnishing his stipulated proportion of men, every proprietor of land was bound to supply his quota of provisions—a rule which contributed to add largely to the horrors of war, by rendering it a matter of necessity that hostilities should support themselves. All kinds of land, except church property, were alienable, by sale, gift or devise; but the lands of the clergy could not be disposed of, save for ecclesiastical purposes. The ground on which a church or other sacred edifice had stood, or which had once been consecrated, though the building upon it were reduced to ruins, or the land had run to waste, was still hallowed, and might not be desecrated by lay appropriation. Among sons the division of property, at the father's death, was equal.

New titles and dignities had arisen among the Franks, since their establishment in Gaul. Besides kings and princes, they had now dukes, counts and seigneurs or barons; together with inferior freemen, and serfs, held in different degrees of thralldom. The population, though still far from being in a settled state, had been long enough in the land to look for their homes within its limits. The wandering life had begun to cease. "The chiefs," to use the language of M. Guizot, "had become attached to the localities they inhabited, to the ties they had contracted, to those domains which they had flattered themselves they should be able to leave to their

children, to those abodes which in time they were to designate their castles, and to those miserable assemblages of colonists and slaves which were one day to rise into villages.... The home life and domestic manners followed in due course. They undoubtedly met with great obstacles from brute passions, the prevailing love of war and the chase; but these obstacles were sure finally to be overcome." Civilisation, therefore, was proceeding, however slowly. That there had been a considerable advance indeed, is testified by the frequent demands of the leudes, for settled laws and customs; and by the ordinances published by Childeric after the deposition of Thierry III.

The laws were usually passed in the national assemblies, held near the capital, in March or May, at which all ranks of freemen were required to be present, and absentees from which were fined. It was customary on these occasions to make rich presents of grain, cattle, horses and attire to the king; and these, aided by the rents of the *Fisc* lands, formed the greater portion of the royal revenues. At the meetings the king presided in person, or by his Referendary or chancellor, surrounded by the clergy, the nobles, and the freemen, who, according to Hincmar, sometimes sat together, and sometimes separately.

As regards personal rights—Every freeman was entitled to hunt, hawk and fish, and to retain whatever he caught; and, in other matters, peaceable possession of moveables for one year gave a legal title to the holder. Males were marriageable at fourteen, and females at twelve years of age; but to these early nuptials the consent of the fathers, both of the bridegroom and bride, was necessary. Cohabitation for a year, without the absence of the man for three nights from home, also constituted legal marriage; but the most solemn form was that by *confarreatio*. Adultery, according to the letter of the law, was punishable; but, from the evidence left of the manners of the people, little regard seems to have been paid to the sanctity of the marriage bed. Princes, nobles, freemen and ecclesiastics were all tainted with the grossest sensuality and licentiousness.

The royal costume of the period has been described in the 'Annales Metenses,' where Clovis III. is said to have presided at the National assembly at Valenciennes in 693, attired in a robe of the form of a dalmatique, white and blue, hanging to his feet before, short on both sides, and trailing behind. He had a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand. The crown was a circle of gold, ornamented with two rows of precious stones; the sceptre was a rod of gold, about the length of the prince himself, and terminating in a cross. The throne had neither back nor arms, but was a mere ornamented stool. A chair of gold had been made by Eloi, who was originally a goldsmith, but elevated himself, by his talents and prudence, to the rank of minister to Clotaire II. and Dagobert, became a bishop, and was afterwards canonised. When he first came to court, this Saint wore a belt set with diamonds; and, besides the golden chair of Clotaire, he made a throne of the same metal for Dagobert.

The dresses of freemen were chiefly of woollen, dyed of the most beautiful colours, and generally made to fit tight to the limbs so as to display their shape and motion. The legs were wrapped about with fillets or bands of various colours. Some, but these were nobles or children, wore tunics; and a few of the highest class added a cloak or mantle to their other garments:—this was mostly of embroidered linen. The female costume was more simple than that of males: a plain cap on the head, a woollen gown, pinned or tied close over the neck, shoulders and bosom, and sandals or embroidered shoes, bound upon the feet with various coloured ribands. Widows were attired like religious persons. Every female was accustomed to labour in her household. Even queens and princesses suckled their own children, and spun their own hose.

The food in common use was corn, variously dressed; fruit, cheese, milk, game, fish, pork and butcher's meat. The drink consisted of milk, ale, cyder, perry and wine. For agricultural purposes, oxen were generally used. Of the arts, some estimate may be formed from the fact, that large bells were cast in the country, that glass was not uncommon, and painting and music were extensively cultivated. Medical knowledge was in a low and rude state. In the laws of the Visigoths it was ordained that "No physician should presume to let blood of a freewoman in the absence of her friends or honest neighbours;" and that he should not enter a prison without a proper attendant, to prevent his administering poison to criminals, and thus screen them from the harsher severities of the law.

That the literature of France was scarcely worthy of the name may be judged from the state and manners of the people. Amid the violence of the times, little leisure could be obtained for study, except by the monastic orders; and their means of information was of the most limited kind. The books and manuscripts of the old Romans were believed to be impious, and were proscribed as such in the early ages of the church—their glowing allusions to the pagan creed and rites being thought to foster a lingering reverence for the classical mythology, and to throw discredit upon the extreme simplicity of primitive Christianity. The popular literature was confined to the legends of martyrs and saints, interspersed with brief, and not very accurate, notices of sacred history—to holy mysteries and hymns, and profane songs and poetry. Gregory of Tours, one of the most enlightened men of his age, bewails the general ignorance of the people, who, he says, had absolutely lost the knowledge of letters. He did what he could, however, for the revival of learning, by enjoining the establishment of schools throughout his diocese, by his exhortations to the princes and nobles with whom he was thrown in contact, and by his own example in collecting and recording the scattered facts which formed the history of his country. Gregory was born in November 544, received his education under his uncle St. Gall, and had the pall conferred on him in August 573. His principal and best known literary work is his 'History of France,' in ten books, beginning with the Creation of

the world, and extending to his own time. It was afterwards continued by Fredegarius, and two nameless continuators, who brought the narrative down to the date of Charlemagne. Gregory wrote also eight books of lives of the Saints, and several minor pieces. His style and language, though superior to those of his contemporaries, shew that the latin tongue had greatly deteriorated since the Fall of the Empire, and the grave credulity of Gregory, in his belief of miracles and supernatural agency would be ludicrous were we not assured that it was genuine, and to be regarded as evidence of the deplorable ignorance of a great nation.

The amusements that prevailed among the better classes, from 481 to 687, appear to have been music, dancing, singing, hunting, hawking, shooting with bows and arrows, and religious and other spectacles. The serfs and lower classes, had doubtless their amusements also, though it may be few, and rather debasing than exhilarating; but ancient historians have generally had too little sympathy with either their pleasures or their sufferings, to enable us confidently to state much with regard to them, save what we glean from their revolts and outbreaks, and the share they were sometimes compelled to take in the transactions of their somewhat hard task-masters. The conditions of female life, of all ranks, may be gathered from those of the males.





CHAPTER III.

FROM THE ELEVATION OF PEPIN D'HERISTAL TO THE ACCESSION OF HUGH
CAPET. A. D. 687 TO 990.

PACIFICATION OF FRANCE BY PEPIN—VICTORIES OF CHARLES MARTEL—THE SARACENS—REIGN
AND CONQUESTS OF CHARLEMAGNE—RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE—
ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING, ART AND SCIENCE—PARTITION AND DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE
—WARS AND INTESTINE DISORDERS—INVASION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORMANS—
CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.



VERYWHERE the success of Pepin was hailed with delight by the leudes, the clergy, and the people of all ranks; for, whatever might have been gained by a few, from the general confusion, at its commencement, the multitude had suffered severely, and all had grown disgusted with the continuance of anarchy. The name and genius of this bold warrior, who sought to arrest the ruin of his country, had been

rendered famous by his achievements, and, from the moment victory declared in his favour at Testry, he was generally regarded as the arbiter of the destinies of France. Every thing was in a state of the wildest disorder at his elevation. The regal name and influence had fallen almost into contempt. The various nations subject to or in alliance with the Franks had already renounced the yoke. The Bretons, the Aquitanians, the Bavarians, the Allemanni, the Saxons, and the Frisons, were all in arms, and prepared to maintain a struggle for independence. The leudes, in establishing their

claims to hereditary succession in their estates and governments, had severed their interest in a great measure from that of the monarch, and remained at home to defend their castles and territories from the aggressions of rivals, instead of combining their efforts to give stability and power to the nation itself. The Empire of the Franks was nominally a gigantic one, stretching from the Elbe to the Atlantic, and from the British channel to the Pyrenees, but this Empire was on the point of crumbling to pieces, and leaving in its place an immense multitude of insignificant States and Principalities, without cohesion, uniformity of laws or customs, common object, or scarcely the germs of civilisation. The prospects of his countrymen, and perhaps of mankind at large, were indeed gloomy, when Pepin d'Heristal arose, and whether urged by merely personal ambition, or that nobler spirit of glory, which seeks to find an immortality in the love and gratitude of benefited man, caused enlightenment to be spread wherever his arms penetrated, and acquired the name of a conqueror, as much on account of his good fame, as the amount of human slaughter which necessarily took place during the wars in which he was engaged. His influence upon his age can only be estimated from the history of the period, and a comparison of the state of France under Ebroin, and its condition under him. It may, however, safely be affirmed that he was one of those great men of whom the Historian of European Civilisation has spoken in the following passage:—"No one," says he, "can say why a great man comes at a particular era, or what he infuses of his own into the development of the world. The secret remains with Providence; but the fact is certain. There are men whom the spectacle of anarchy or of social stagnation strikes and distresses, who are intellectually shocked at such a display, as with a fact that should not be; and who become possessed with an uncontrollable desire to change it, and to plant some rule, some uniformity, regularity, and permanency in the world, in its stead. These acquire and wield a terrible, and often a tyrannical power, committing a thousand iniquities and errors, for human weakness accompanies it, yet a glorious and salutary power, for it gives to humanity a vigorous jerk, an admirable impulse."

Thus it was with Pepin, the main object of whose policy certainly appears to have been the regeneration of France. He had the power, and might have assumed the title of king; but he was content, in order to avoid the prolongation of civil strife, to use the name of Thierry in all his public acts, though it is evident that the nominal sovereign was merely a foil to the actual one. The phantom was brought forward on certain solemn occasions, invested with all the emblems and insignia of royalty, and was maintained in a palace, surrounded by guards, and all the minions of a voluptuous court; but he was permitted to have little intercourse with the people, and to intermeddle in such matters of state only as required the formality of his sanction, and then, like the kings of the present day, he had but to give utterance to words which were set down for him by his minister.

"Pepin," says a modern author, but with scarcely a liberal appreciation of motives, "considering that it was more difficult to secure and maintain power, than to acquire it, turned his attention to the means of increasing and establishing his popularity. He did not pass a general act of indemnity, but what was equally generous, and more ingratiating, he readily granted a pardon to all who entreated for it, and on their taking an oath of allegiance to him, he restored to them all their property and privileges." His first efforts were devoted to the re-establishment of order and discipline throughout the realm. An enquiry was made into the nature and extent of the grievances under which the people laboured, and such as admitted of speedy remedy, were at once redressed. The state of the finances was examined, and regulations made with respect to them which relieved the nation from many oppressive burdens, and, at the same time, gave form and substance to the actual revenues.

But in the midst of his pacific labours, he was called away to the field by a revolt of the Frisons, who, under Radbode their Duke, had declared their independence, and refused to pay the tribute, or perform the services they had formerly yielded. Pepin, at the head of a large army, made a sudden descent upon their territory, and after defeating them in one or two engagements, reduced them to their customary subjection, and compelled them to pay the costs of the war they had provoked. The Franks fixed their winter quarters in the hostile country, and in the spring returned across the Rhine. It was on returning from this expedition that Pepin revived the national assemblies of the States, which, amid the confusion of late years, had been disused among the Frank princes; whose neglect in this respect contributed to heighten the general discontent of the people. The first assembly was summoned for March, 690. The nobles and bishops had equal votes and rank in the meeting, and the freemen and inferior clergy had also like privileges. Pepin, indeed, was always especially attentive to the ecclesiastics. Theirs, crude as it was, was the only institution which had acquired definite form and consistency, and which possessed the principles of movement and of order, at once energetic and systematic. "The church had stirred up all the great questions which interest men. All the problems concerning human nature, and all the chances of human destiny, were its matters of discussion." Churchmen consequently had more knowledge, and were more highly civilized than others, and hence they were better able to give advice for the reorganization of a shattered realm. Laws were passed at the meeting for the governance of the clergy, as well as the laity. The poor were cared for. Rules were established concerning the administration of wardships, the protection of orphans and wards, and the general conformity of manners. King Thierry was present in royal robes, and seated on his throne; but the outward semblance of majesty was all that now pertained to him. At the close of the assembly he withdrew to the seclusion of his palace-prison, till a similar occasion should call him forth to enact again the same dull part in a future pageant.

It has been said that Pepin fought with one hand, and organized with the other. The assertion is scarcely an exaggeration; for hardly had the *Champ de Mars* broken up, when he was compelled to summon the leudes once more to meet him in arms at an appointed rendezvous, war having been renewed by the Frisons the moment the Franks had withdrawn from their territory. The struggle to subdue and retain in subjection these warlike Germans, and even to repel their aggressive attempts, was now almost incessant; and the strife appears to have originated not so much from a mere rebellious spirit in the tributary population, as from a pressure to which that population was itself, at this time, subjected from its more northerly neighbours. "The tribes were pushed on the north-east by new races, and their expeditions were undertaken from necessity, and were not mere forays for pillage. Their own settlements were interfered with, and they were compelled to seek for others. The Frisons, the Saxons, the Bavarians and others were pushed forward by the Obotrites, the Wiltzes, the Sorabes, the Bohemians, and the whole Slavonic race, which, pressing upon the Germanic, goaded it towards the south and west." The details of this constant warfare have not been preserved in the few and imperfect records of the period; but their duration and vigour are sufficiently attested by an expression used by the author of the '*Annales de Metz*,' who, speaking of Pepin when he lay sick at his house at Jopil, in the year 713, says, that he left the troops in their cantonments beyond the Rhine to hold the enemy in awe; and for distinguishing the date he calls it, "the year in which was no war."

It was not foreign enemies alone, however, that Pepin had to deal with. The Austrasian, Neustrian and Burgundian leudes, who had less licence accorded them than formerly, in return for more important services, had gradually grown discontented with the rule of their ancient companion in arms; and on more than one occasion they sought an opportunity to throw off his domination. They felt that the victory they had gained over royalty had merely procured them a change of masters; and, without enquiring whether the old or the new rule was best adapted to promote their own permanent welfare or that of the kingdom, they exclaimed against the tyranny of the ambitious mayor, and formed a powerful confederacy for the restoration of "the ancient form of government." An occasion was afforded, in the latter years of Pepin, for an open display of the hostility which had arisen towards his family. He had exalted his two sons, Drogon and Grimoald, to the rank of Mayors, or Dukes, of Burgundy and Neustria; upon which the nobles, seeing themselves excluded from all participation of power, rose in revolt. Drogon, in the course of the struggle, died, and Grimoald was assassinated; but Pepin himself, though old and bowed by infirmities, could not be shaken from his high place, nor his power be materially abridged. Regardless of the threats and violence of his compeers, he appointed his infant grandson Theodoald his successor over the whole realm, with the title of Mayor of Austrasia; and he had sufficient influence to procure his recognition. But

he did not survive long enough to establish what he had ordained. He died at Jopil, on the 16th of December, 714, leaving the government in the hands of Dagobert III. as king, and Theodoald as mayor—"one phantom," according to Bossuet, "overshadowing another." The character of Pepin has been already sketched. It only remains to be added that Thierry, the nominal king had died in the year 690 or 691, and been succeeded by his eldest son Clovis III., who, after reigning five years, had been followed by Childebert III., and he had given place to Dagobert III. These changes had all taken place during the life of Pepin; but they had neither created a sensation, nor interfered with the political arrangements or transactions of the time. Their long hair and royal robes, and the luxuries of a palace life, were all that were now left of their brilliant heritage to the descendants of Clovis. They resided chiefly in the pleasant mansion of Maumaque between Compiègne and Noyon, on the banks of the Oise, whence they were brought, on any state occasion, to preside on a golden throne, and to put their signature to *Capitulaires*, prepared for them by the minister, whose will was to them, as to others, a law. In going from Maumaque and returning, the princes were



drawn by oxen in a rude carriage without springs. They were constantly attended by guards, and their days were a round of rural fêtes and quiet enjoyments, such as poets of all ages have delighted to picture, but which men, who interest themselves in the destinies of their fellows, have seldom cared to embrace. The labours of government, and the renown of great deeds, formed at once the occupation and the reward of Pepin, who, for his wise administration, was revered in his day throughout Europe, and has since received the general applause of historians. Nearly all the sovereign princes,

his contemporaries, sent ambassadors to his court, and solicited his friendship; and the Pope, in writing to him, styled him *Subregulus* or viceroy.

The death of Pepin furnished to the leudes a new opportunity of evincing their impatience of the controul in which they had been so long held by the master mind of the Mayor of Austrasia. His grandson was still a child, and his widow, Plectrude, who was charged with the guardianship of the boy, and consequently with the direction of the government, though a talented and energetic woman, was still a female, and as such unable to govern the fierce spirits with which she was surrounded, and who had nearly wrested the sceptre from the powerful hands of her husband. She had no time either to consolidate her strength or exercise her influence. As she was journeying to Paris with Theodoald, whose inauguration in his high office was fixed to take place there, she was attacked by a body of troops near Compiègne, and, her guards being routed, she and her grandson were compelled to fly for their lives. The Neustrians forthwith elected a mayor from among their own chiefs; and he, whose name was Rainfroy, called to the throne of his country Chilperic II., the son of Childeric II., who had escaped from Bodilon and his friends when his father was assassinated, and had been brought up in a monastery, under the name of Daniel.

Chilperic was grown to manhood, and being an active and intelligent prince, it was impossible to hold him under similar restrictions to those which Pepin had imposed on the sons of Thierry. He became at once the colleague, and not the mere passive instrument of Rainfroy; but he wanted either the inclination or the power to rid himself entirely of the domination of the mayor. His administration, however, appears to have been vigorous and popular. After restoring order throughout Neustria, he turned his arms against Austrasia; and this country being at the same moment attacked by the Frisons and Saxons, seemed about to fall a prey to one or other of its invaders, if not to be parted among them, in the manner the Roman Empire had been parted among the Franks, the Goths, and the Lombards. The emergency, however, called forth a saviour.

This was Charles, the son of Pepin, by Alpaide, a wife or concubine, taken after the birth of Drogon and Grimoald. The young man was twenty-five years old, of powerful frame, indomitable courage, and high military talent. The wild impetuosity of his youth had given offence to his father, and he had consequently been estranged from him during life and left unprovided for at his death. He has been accused, indeed, of having been accessory to the murder of his brother Grimoald, and to have taken part in the struggle of the leudes to deprive Pepin of the power which he wielded; but whether this be so or not, he had been imprisoned by Plectrude, immediately on the death of his father, and having contrived to escape from his keepers, fled to Austrasia, gathered around him the bravest of the leudes, and declared against a female reign. Plectrude and her grandson having been chased

from power, he turned upon the Germans, defeated and repulsed them on all sides, and marched, at the head of a small but enthusiastic body of troops, against the Neustrians, whom he defeated in 716 on the skirts of the forest of Ardennes, and under the very walls of the palace of Amblet. This victory was obtained rather by stratagem than force. He drew up his little band on the heights which overlooked the royal demesne; whence one of his trusty followers descended at night to the camp of Chilperic, and raising a cry that Charles had arrived among the host, commenced the confusion by entering a tent, and wounding some of the sleeping soldiers. The disorder was instant and irremediable. Every one sought safety for himself, without regard to his comrades, or to the number of assailants, and the Austrasians had merely to slay. Rainfroy and King Chilperic never halted, or endeavoured to rally their fugitive supporters till they were far from the fatal spot where they had been surprised.

An anecdote relating to this onslaught affords a curious light by which to estimate the mingled ferocity and superstition which pervaded all classes; and is one of those testimonies of national manners which are so rare in the early annals, and which, when met with, are too valuable as illustrations at once of individual character and of the social condition of a people, to be passed over without notice. Several of those who fled from the camp of



Chilperic took refuge in the church of Amblet, till conditions were granted them by the victor. Among them was one who afterwards appeared, lame

and bleeding, before Charles, to complain of an Austrasian soldier, who had violated the right of sanctuary by wounding him when within the doors of the church. Charles caused his accused follower to be summoned, and demanded an explanation. The soldier indignantly rebutted the charge of sacrilege, asserting that, when he struck the Neustrian on the heel, though his body might have been partially within the sacred edifice, his wounded leg was without, and that consequently no offence had been committed. This was also the opinion of the chief, and the case was accordingly dismissed.

Charles had not yet a sufficient force at his disposal to take full advantage of his victory; but, in the following spring, when the fame of his exploits had assembled round his standard all the bold, as well as the patriotic, and while the Germans were recruiting themselves after former defeats, he took the road for Neustria, and instead of waiting for a new invasion, carried the war into the territories of the enemy. His route is said to have been the same as that chosen by Clovis, when he commenced the conquest of Gaul; and the result of his enterprise was not entirely dissimilar. After traversing the forest of Charbonnière, he obtained sight of the army of Chilperic and Rainfroy, encamped at Vinci between Arras and Cambray. Here a battle took place on Sunday the 19th of March, 717, in which the Neustrians were totally defeated, and their king and mayor saved themselves by flight. This victory established the power of Charles, as had that of Testry the influence of his father. He marched immediately upon Paris, caused himself to be proclaimed mayor, and received the pledges of the nobles and clergy to be faithful to the laws and ordinances he might promulgate under the sanction of the king. This done, he advanced towards Cologne, which Pepin had rendered the capital of Austrasia, and where Plectrude and Theodoald had found an asylum after their defeat by Rainfroy. The city sustained a brief siege, but eventually opened its gates, and delivered the national treasures to the conqueror. Of the subsequent fate of Plectrude and her grandson, little or nothing is known; but they are believed to have lived in seclusion, and to have been permitted to die natural deaths.

Chilperic and Rainfroy, immediately after their defeat, had taken refuge among the German tribes then seeking to make head against the Franks; but the fame of Charles had overawed the malcontents, and the king and his minister, finding themselves abandoned, withdrew to the court of Eudes, Duke of Aquitaine, who received them hospitably, and at once attached himself to their cause. Charles having disengaged himself from all other enemies now marched against these; but no war ensued. The troops of Eudes and his protégés disbanded on the approach of the Austrasians, and Chilperic and Rainfroy separated and fled in different directions. The king was delivered to Charles by the citizens of Orléans, and was allowed to retain his regal title, but only on condition of becoming for the future a *Roi fainéant*. Rainfroy, at the head of a numerous band of partisans, was enabled to defend himself, or more properly to escape being captured for four or five years

longer, and when at last he surrendered himself to Charles, he was in a position to stipulate for the title of Count, and the government of the county of Angers. It was not therefore till about the year 720 that Charles was sufficiently freed from intestine struggles to permit him to proceed with the great work of reforming and consolidating the laws and institutions of France, which had been commenced by his father; and even then he had the same obstacles to contend against, as had fettered the exertions of Pepin. The Frisons, the Allemanni, the Saxons, and all the swarming hordes from the Rhine to the Danube were continually in arms, and required all his vigilance and ability to prevent his empire from being overwhelmed. It was a conflict of giants, and could the details be rescued from the errors and negligence of contemporary chroniclers, they would form one of the most interesting chapters in the records of mankind. The influence of the contest on the formation of European society, has been, and is, universally felt and acknowledged; but we know not for how much nor to whom we are indebted. A thick cloud covers alike the heroes and victims of the time—the origin of what barbaric virtue bequeathed to us of good, and of what it entailed upon us of evil. One thing however is certain. Whatever the strife and confusion may have cost, in individual or even general suffering, has been more than compensated for by the opportunity afforded for the mental and physical development and improvement of the human kind. A degree of vigour and restlessness, of zeal, enterprise and courage, unknown to the settled populations of early ages, has been infused into the races with which the barbarians mingled, which to an incalculable extent, has advanced the civilization of the world. These considerations ought not perhaps to remove our horror of the violence and rapine to which the various countries of Europe, about the same period, became a prey; but they will at least tend to remove our prejudices and to induce us calmly to reflect upon what is too apt to excite our disgust.

Before proceeding with the narrative of the great events which at this time began to threaten the dominion of Christianity in Spain and the South of France, with annihilation, it is necessary to revert to the affairs of Aquitaine, where Eudes had deemed himself powerful enough to oppose the might of France in the hands of the son of Pepin, and where, subsequently, the conquering career of the Saracens was arrested. Dagobert, when he had reconquered the country, in 636, from Amandus and his grandsons, the children of Caribert, had not deprived the latter of their realm, but merely compelled them to take an oath of fidelity to himself as their suzerain, and he had exacted a similar oath from the Gascon chiefs, who had gone to Clichy to implore his favour. These oaths, like oaths of the same kind in all ages and nations, had been observed merely while their observance was compulsory. The death of Dagobert had been the signal for a new attempt on the part of the southern provinces to recover their independence; and during the confusion which afterwards arose, they

succeeded in throwing off the Frankish yoke, and, if they were unable to attain political liberty, they at least succeeded in gaining an interval of licence. About the year 673, the period of the assassination of Childeric II., the people of Septimania, whose manners, language, laws and customs were in almost all respects similar to those of the Aquitanians, impatient of the divided rule under which they were held by the Spanish Visigoths and the Franks, rose in revolt, and declared their independence. A reign of anarchy and terror ensued. Predatory chiefs made incursions into the country, both from the territories of the Franks and the Spaniards; the Septimanians were divided among themselves in favour of divers leaders and princes, and the land every where became a prey to rapine and disorder. Wamba, a prince of considerable vigour and talent, having ascended the Visigoth throne, exerted himself to the utmost to restore order throughout his dominions.

His first expedition was against the Gascons dwelling along the banks of the Ebro, in which he succeeded in reducing the insurgents; but in the meantime Hilderic, Count of Nîmes, believing the moment favourable, took arms, and ranging around him a number of other Septimanian nobles, endeavoured to establish a new government and sovereignty. Duke Paul was sent against this confederation; but instead of attempting to subdue them, he passed with his whole army over to their camp, and was immediately proclaimed King of Septimania and Narbonne. The revolution spread rapidly through the neighbouring Provinces, and Catalonia had already declared in favour of Paul, when Wamba, having conquered the Gascons, marched against the new enemy. Catalonia did not offer a long resistance to the efforts of the king. A few days are said to have sufficed to reduce the whole Province to submission; and with nearly the same facility all the important towns and cities in the revolted countries returned to their allegiance. At length Nîmes alone, where Paul, with the principal chiefs of his party, and the greater part of his army and auxiliaries, many of whom were Aquitanians, had shut themselves up, held out against Wamba. In this city the insurgents daily expected the arrival of Lupus, Duke of the Gascons, with such aid as would enable them to take the field against the Visigoth monarch. Wamba however did not give time for the arrival of succour, but pushing the siege vigorously against the town for two days, set fire at the end of the second to the gates, and carried the place by storm. The garrison fled towards the amphitheatre, and a scene of dreadful carnage ensued. Hilderic and the people of Nîmes, enraged at the result of their outbreak, fell upon Paul and his followers, whom they accused of having betrayed them, as they abandoned the city; and added the fierceness of private hatred to the general horrors of war. All the streets and avenues were choked with killed and wounded men and horses, and the struggle continued even when the combattants had closed against the troops of Wamba the gates of the arena, and thus obtained a temporary refuge from all but their own uncontrollable passions. The real enemy was unheeded. No one sought to oppose his ingress to Nîmes, and the circus was consequently

blockaded the moment after it had been occupied. The siege was bravely sustained for a few days; but at length the insurgents were compelled to yield to the many necessities which beset them, and to stipulate for surrender. Fortune at this time seems to have been in her most fickle and tantalizing mood. Scarcely had conditions been granted to Paul, when it was ascertained that the Gascons were debouching through the valley of Aude, and were within two days' march of the beleaguered town. It was too late, nevertheless, to remedy what had happened; and Lupus, finding himself isolated in his position, hastened to return to his own country, whither he was closely followed by the victorious troops of Wamba, which captured the greater part of his baggage and stores.

Lupus, however, was both an able and ambitious man. On reaching his own mountains, his first efforts were directed to the collection of a numerous army, which he constantly recruited with bands of adventurers, desperate men and outlaws, from all quarters. In his ranks were seen deserters from the standard of Wamba, discontented Septimanians, Aquitanians, Burgundians, Basques and Bretons, intermingled with a large portion of Neustrian leudes, whom the violence of Ebroin had driven from their country and estates. He was undisputed master of the whole of Gascony, and it is believed of Toulouse also; and he has been suspected of aspiring to dominion in Septimania: but however this may have been, he now prepared to take advantage of the state of the country, and in 675 passed to the north of the Garonne, and while Ebroin and Dagobert were contesting for the sovereign authority, seized Limoges, and prevailed on the bishop and inhabitants to transfer their allegiance to him, and to take an oath of fidelity to his government.

In the meantime, the children of Caribert, the princes Boggis and Bertrand, disappeared entirely from the struggle, overshadowed by the Duke of Gascony, their protector. It appears that they had even been deposed, and probably destroyed by him, for it is known that the wives of both, Aude and Phigberte, withdrew themselves into Austrasia, where, with Hubert the son of Bertrand, they were established by Martin and Pepin, who employed the arms and influence of the young prince against Ebroin, and subsequently raised him to the episcopal throne of Liège, where he became so famous for his good qualities, and personal activity, that he was eventually canonized, under the name of St. Hubert. It is difficult to understand the movements or politics of the period, which are all involved in thick obscurity. It is certain nevertheless, that whatever might have been the fate of his father, Eudes, who has been already mentioned as Duke of Aquitaine, was the son of Boggis, and that he not only inherited his paternal government, but succeeded Lupus in the Province of Gascony, about 681. In 719, we find him endeavouring to support his relative, Chilperic, in his struggle against Charles, at which time, he was master of all the old Visigoth dominions, in the South of France, with the exception of Septimania, and possessed nearly as much territory, if not power, as the son of Pepin. He seems to have been an able and brave prince, and

had he lived a few years earlier, he might have consolidated a realm, which would have vied with that of the Visigoths, and held the Franks themselves in check. He was unable, however, to cope with Charles, and the attempt to do so, was the first serious blow to his rising power and importance. The invasion of the Arabs was the next. The rest of his reign and life, as far as the particulars thereof can be gleaned, offers little more than a series of disasters and humiliations.

The irruptions of the Saracens into Europe greatly resembled those of the barbarians from Germany and the north, which commenced six or seven centuries previously. The same wild enthusiasm, the same perseverance and energy, the same desire to obtain settlements in the lands into which they rushed with the overwhelming impetuosity of a torrent to conquer or perish, animated all the tribes and races. Perhaps in enthusiasm the Arabs might have exceeded the northmen. Their blood, like their climate, was warmer, and they were sustained by the memory of the recent victories of their great prophet Mohammed, and by the injunctions of the Koran to exterminate all infidels, and to rear the crescent on every high place throughout the world. Alaric, Genseric, Attila, Clovis and Alboin, had merely personal incentives to their expeditions—wealth, dominion, and a better heritage than that which they had voluntarily left, or whence they had been expelled by races more powerful than themselves. They sought not to impose the worship of their gods upon the races they vanquished, but readily accommodated themselves to the mythology of the countries into which they came. Religion interfered in no way with their temporal affairs, and as they found that places of future reward and punishment were provided in all the religious systems with which they were acquainted, they seem to have readily accepted that which consorted best with their habits, and gave them most influence. Hence many of them forsook the idolatry of Woden and Thor for that of Jove and Venus, and at a later period they as readily, and with as little zeal, conformed themselves to the ritual, if not the creed and precepts of Christianity. The Moslems, on the contrary, had no laws but what were contained in the Koran, and were expressly promised that fidelity to the prophet should ensure them dominion on earth, and an eternal life of such voluptuousness as they had been accustomed to indulge, in heaven. They were both conquerors and missionaries; teachers of a new way of salvation, and promulgators of a new code of jurisprudence; “the sword and the word were wielded by the same hands:” but this last was not a new phenomenon. The Christian church had already set the example of endeavouring to make proselytes by compulsion, and of destroying those whom they could not convert. Whether the Arabs were pressed forward or not from the east, by other races encroaching upon their ancient settlements, as were the Germans from the north, is a question which has not yet been satisfactorily decided.

The first appearance of the Saracens in Europe is believed to have been

about the year 711, when, having overrun the African provinces of ancient Rome, they were invited into Spain by the celebrated Count Julian, who desired to avenge the wrong done to him by Roderic the Goth, in having violated his daughter. They obeyed the call of the Count with alacrity, and came in immense numbers, not merely to redress the grievances of Julian, but to find pleasant homes for themselves on the banks of the Guadalquivir. After numerous skirmishes, without any decisive result, the forces of Tarik, the Mohammedan general, and those of Roderic met on the plain of Zeres, and a general engagement ensued. The Visigoth king has been represented by contemporaries as attired in gold and purple, and lolling in a car of ivory drawn by two white mules. To animate his troops he reminded them of their numerical superiority, and exhorted them to imitate the bravery of their ancestors, who had overturned the Roman Empire. The Saracens were also addressed by their chief. The triumphs of Mohammed were recalled to their recollection, and the victories recounted in which the troops then present had borne a share. Flight was pointed out to them as impossible. "Follow then your general," exclaimed Tarik, "I am determined either to lose my life in this encounter, or to trample on the prostrate King of the Goths." The Spaniards, unable to sustain the fury of the Arab onset, gave way in all directions; and Tarik, before night-fall, was master of the field. Roderic, the last of the Gothic kings, either perished on the field, or in an attempt to pass the Guadalquivir; "the deserved fate," says a Saracen author, "of those kings who withdraw themselves from the field of battle."

Tarik advanced with all speed to the gates of Toledo, which were captured after a brief siege, and Castile and Leon were speedily overrun. This rapid conquest had been greatly accelerated by the predecessor of Roderic on the Gothic throne; who, in order to free himself from the apprehension of constant revolts among his turbulent subjects, had caused most of the cities and fortresses in his dominions to be dismantled. In less than four months the Arabs were masters of all the fertile provinces of Spain. A small, but gallant band of patriots alone held out against the invaders; and these, under the command of Pelagius, a cousin of Roderic, maintained themselves in valleys and caverns among the mountains of Cantabria, and eventually founded there the realm of Asturias, which the Saracens named Galicia, and which formed the nucleus of the Christian kingdoms of Spain, that gradually arose in the middle ages.

The settlement and consolidation of the Arab power in Spain was almost as sudden as their conquest. All that the Visigoths had possessed fell rapidly into their hands, as well beyond as within the Pyrenees, and France itself was menaced by the same conquering hordes. "Masters," says Fauriel, "of all the defiles of the Pyrenees, the Saracens were brought, on every point of their frontier, in contact with Gaul. By the western passes they were enabled to approach the mountainous cantons of Gascony, and by

those of the east they could descend upon Septimania. The last were chosen for their first irruption into Gaul. The Christian chroniclers have assigned the commencement of these irruptions to the year 719, in which the capture of Narbonne took place, but there is reason to believe that they are incorrect in this date. The Arabs themselves have distinguished, with precision, several kinds of expeditions against infidels, to which their conquering warriors were accustomed, by the nature of which it might be known whether the war was undertaken with a view to definitive conquest and settlement, or merely for plunder and ravage. To every expedition, or series of expeditions, intended to lead to conquest, they gave a name equivalent to that of a serious war (*el djihed*); but invasions which had no object beyond the acquisition of booty and the capture of slaves, were confounded under the more vague denomination of *gazouat*—signifying sudden surprise, pillage and devastation. In general, the latter mode of warfare was a prelude to the former; meant to test the enemy's courage, and to ascertain his strong and his weak points. It appears certain that they did not proceed otherwise in Gaul, and that before possessing themselves of Septimania in sovereignty, they had more than once menaced and ravaged it."

With such formidable enemies hovering upon their borders the various races of the south soon found that their only hope of safety lay in dismissing their private animosities and feuds, and combining their strength and resources under a single chief, who might be able to make head against the foe. Eudes was chosen as the common leader. His authority had been already recognised in Gascony and Aquitaine. The Provençals now ranged themselves around his standard and proclaimed him king. The Septimaniens, however, were overwhelmed before they had been able to concert measures for defence, and, Narbonne being surrendered in 719 to the Arabs, the submission of the whole province immediately followed. Zama, who conducted the marauding Saracens, learning that preparations were being made to oppose him, hastened into the territory of Eudes, in hopes of being able to fall upon him unawares. He marched at once to the gates of Toulouse, the Aquitanian capital, to which he laid siege; but here he is believed to have sustained a defeat, which for some time checked the conquering ardour of his followers, and prevented their making a new attempt till about the year 726; when a new chief, Amblessa, made an expedition into Provence, in which the Moslems were again routed with the loss of their general.

This brave defence of his country procured for Eudes an honourable reputation throughout Europe. All eyes were fixed on him, as the main-stay of Christianity; and adventurers flocked to him from all quarters, as to one, under whom glory and wealth were certain to be won by the bold and brave. Even before the battle of Toulouse, Pope Gregory II. had sent to him three sacred sponges, which had been used by the successors of St. Peter to cleanse the communion table; and an unexpected alliance with a Saracen chief,

now seemed to place it beyond question that Eudes was destined to transmit to posterity high renown as a hero, and extensive power as a monarch.

It should perhaps have been mentioned, that the Moslems who had crossed the straits from Africa, to avenge the quarrel of Count Julian, were of two races; the larger portion being Arabs, and the rest Berbers, or Moors. These nations did not mingle by intermarriages, but remained distinct, and regarded each other with some jealousy, as having separate interests, and requiring a separate government. In 731, this difference of race and feeling went nigh to jeopardize the Moslem monarchy in Spain. "A chief of Moorish race," according to Isidore of Béja, "named Munuz, having learned that his countrymen in Libya, were sorely oppressed by their Arab judges, forthwith formed an alliance with the Franks, and prepared to wage a cruel war against the Saracens of Spain." This Munuz was in command of the frontier of the Pyrenees, the most important post in the conquered territory. He not only entered into correspondence with Eudes, but took his daughter Lampagie in marriage; and Septimania, shut up between the allied forces, seemed about to fall into their hands. The vigilance of the Saracen leader, however, defeated the project of the confederates. Abderame, who then governed Spain, having notice of the meditated treachery of his general, suddenly attacked Munuz, who, deserted on the instant by his Moorish accomplices, was compelled to seek for safety in flight. He did not escape, however, but was overtaken and slain, in one of the defiles of the Pyrenees; while his bride, the beautiful Lampagie, was seized in her palace, and sent to adorn the seraglio of the Prophet's successor at Damascus.

Following up this slight success, Abderame led his army through the mountain passes, and debouched, in the spring of 732, on the Gascon plains, by way of the valley of Hengué, so celebrated since in History, Poetry, and Romance, as the valley of Roncevaux. The force which he conducted to this invasion is stated, by the most credible authorities, to have amounted to eighty thousand warriors; but the Christian chroniclers, supported by popular tradition, swell that number to four hundred thousand, including women, children, and slaves—a host "resembling rather a colony than an army." Whatever might have been the actual strength of this horde, however, it was sufficient to appal the whole population of the South of France, and to induce Eudes to implore the aid of his old opponent and victor, Charles of Heristal.

Since the year 720, Charles had been constantly occupied in reforming the administration of his own country, and in yearly struggles to repel the aggressions of the German tribes. He had, about 731, made a single excursion beyond the Loire, on some offence given by Eudes, but the instant submission of the latter had prevented any important result. Shortly after his return to Paris, he was surprised by a visit from the Duke of Aquitaine, who had come almost alone, and in despair, to solicit protection against Abderame,

whose hordes had already burst over his realm, and swept every thing before them. A terrible battle had taken place, near Bordeaux, in which the Aquitanians had been defeated, and where, says Isidore of Béja, "God alone knows the number that perished." The Saracens had pursued their victorious career, even beyond the confines of Aquitaine, and had exhibited the crescent beneath the walls of Sens and Autun. News of these inroads was pouring in on all sides, and Charles, however he might have been disposed towards Eudes, found it necessary to his own safety to bestir himself in the strife that had arisen. He at once, therefore, sent back the Duke of Aquitaine to collect the wrecks of his army, gathered a large body of Franks, and marched at their head to the conflict. When Charles departed from his capital in search of them, the Moslems were ravaging the districts of Tours and Poitiers; laying waste the land with fire and sword, and reducing towns, villages, churches and palaces, to piles of blackened and smoking ruins.

The hostile forces met in a plain between Tours and Poitiers, when the barbarians of the east and of the west, for the squadrons of Charles were filled with troops drawn from the banks of the Rhine, found themselves for the first time in each other's presence. The Austrasians looked on the Arabs as pigmies, and despised them and their array; and the Saracens, accustomed to rely more on their activity than their strength, and confident in their immensely superior numbers, regarded the heavily accoutred and slow-moving Franks as an easy prey. The commanders on both sides had equal reputation among their followers, and were well matched for skill and daring. After resting on their arms, front to front, for a week, the battle commenced. Charles led his hardy warriors to the onset, and with sabre



and battle axe, speedily burst through and levelled the front ranks of the foe. The arrows and javelins of the Arabs and Moors whistled in vain around the mailed heads of their antagonists, who, according to Isidore of Béja, "remained immovable as a wall, seeming as if bound together by a bed of ice"—their tall and strong figures, contrasting forcibly with the slight forms and rapid motions of the men of the east. The Saracens, however, as one rank disappeared under the blows of their assailants, still presented a new front, dispersed, rallied again, extended their lines, and contracted them at pleasure, prolonging the contest as if to weary the arms of their opponents with mere slaughter. After many hours of carnage, and towards evening, Charles directed Eudes to wheel round in silence and secrecy, and to fall upon the Saracen host from behind. This movement succeeded. Presently loud and piercing cries of women and slaves were heard from the rear of the camp of Abdérame, and the Moslems began to give ground. Charles urged forward all his troops for a decisive blow, and the Saracens, thrown into disorder, took to flight. The shouting of the two armies, mingled with the cries and groans of the wounded and dying, now shook the earth like thunder; and resistance soon ceased. Abdérame himself could not be driven or tempted from his post, but with a few faithful followers fought on till his head was cloven by the axe of a Frank. The pursuit was as terrible as the fight itself, and the field was strewn with dead and wounded. The darkness of night alone saved a remnant of the Moslems, who lost all their baggage and booty, their slaves, their wives and children. Historians have stated their loss at upwards of three hundred and sixty thousand souls, but this is certainly exaggerated, even supposing the number that accompanied them, incapable of bearing arms, to have exceeded that of the warriors. Of the Franks but fifteen hundred men are computed to have perished. Charles, from the vigorous strokes which he dealt in the thick of this battle upon the heads of the Saracens, which were said to have resembled those of the hammer on the anvil, acquired his surname of Martel (Hammer.)

This celebrated victory broke the power of the Arabs north of the Pyrenees, and terminated their course of western conquest. They withdrew at once from all their possessions in Gascony, Aquitaine and Provence, and contented themselves, for a time at least, with the territory which had belonged to the Visigoths, whose Empire they had subverted. Eudes and his subjects, nevertheless, gained little from the success of their allies, but merely escaped the yoke of the infidels to be subjected to that of the scarcely less hated Franks. Eudes was not permitted to quit the camp of Charles Martel till he had taken an oath of fidelity, and done homage to him as suzerain. He was compelled, moreover, to abandon the sovereignty of Provence, on which a Frank governor was nominally imposed; and Lyons, which had freed itself from subjection during the civil wars under Ebroin, was reduced once more to obedience. The population of the South was thus

taught the often repeated lesson, that foreign assistance rarely secures independence to a nation.

Eudes died in 735, and was succeeded by his son Hunald, who, refusing to renew the oath of allegiance taken by his father, drew on himself the hostility of Charles. "Eudes being dead," says an ancient southern chronicler, "Charles took arms against his son, and each wrought the other much evil; but, after many vicissitudes, and the slaying of many men on both sides, the parties concluded an alliance, which, notwithstanding, did not long continue."

Meanwhile, though Eudes had conceded Provence to Charles, the troops of the latter had not advanced into the country farther than the Durance, having halted in Avignon. Indeed, the opposition of the people was a powerful, and perhaps unforeseen, obstacle to the ambition of the conqueror. Rather than submit to the stern domination of the men of the north, the nobles and freemen declared their readiness to make common cause with the Saracens, and even invited the latter to renew their invasion. While the Franks hesitated, the Arabs and Provençals matured their plans; and in 736, an army of Saracens, under the conduct of Yousouf, crossed the Pyrenees and took possession of the country from the Mediterranean to Lyons. The negotiations for this revolution had been conducted by Mauronte, who, since the resignation of his authority by Eudes, had exercised great influence in the national councils. It was owing to his intrigues also that the Arabs obtained admittance into Avignon, still occupied by a garrison of Franks, left there by Charles. Okba, who after the death of Abderame had been appointed governor of Spain by Obed-Allah, was, in the meantime, preparing a new expedition, as powerful as that destroyed at Poitiers, to invade the Frank realm; and the banks of the Garonne and the Loire were threatened with the same devastation as had been already inflicted on the banks of the Rhone.

Charles did not behold the gathering storm without apprehension. The moment, indeed, was critical. The Lombards, who, like the Provençals, were Arians, were continually solicited to make a diversion in favour of their brethren by crossing the Alps, and complicating the Frank embarrassments in the South. Charles himself was then occupied in the Low Countries with the Frisons, whom he had just reduced from the condition of disaffected tributaries to that of subjects, and placed over them a Frank Duke, compelling them, at the same time, to abandon their old German deities and to embrace christianity. A single defeat, almost a doubt of success, would have been sufficient to destroy the labours of his life. But Charles did not despair. With the first fine days of spring, in the year 737, he took the road for Burgundy, whither he had sent before him part of his army, commanded by a brother, or half-brother, named Childebrand, and arrived in person at Avignon during the progress of the siege which Childebrand had instituted. He was too impatient to await the result of the blockade, but

immediately attacked and carried the city by assault, and after putting Athime, the Mussulman general, and his garrison to the sword, and plundering the inhabitants, he set fire to the place and abandoned it.

Instead of continuing his march along the Rhone, and hastening to Arles, the head-quarters of the insurgents, as had been expected, Charles crossed the river, and pushed on at once to the plains of Septimania, whence the greater portion of its Saracen defenders had been withdrawn for the occupation of Provence. He had already blockaded Narbonne, when he received tidings of the descent from the Pyrenees of a large army of Arabs, for the defence of Septimania. He immediately abandoned his battering train, and, concentrating his troops, met the foe about five or six miles from the city. Here, in the small valley of Berre, between the mountains of Corbières and the salt lake of Sigean, a battle was shortly afterwards fought, in which Charles is said to have been the victor; but from which no decisive advantage resulted. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the Franks were not in reality the vanquished, since Charles, instead of renewing his attempt upon Narbonne, retired from Septimania, committing the most horrible excesses in his march. Maguelonne was utterly destroyed, and large troops of the wretched inhabitants, "coupled two and two like dogs," were driven away into captivity. On reaching Nîmes, he broke down the gates and ramparts, and would have delivered the amphitheatre to the flames; but the stone walls resisted combustion, and remain standing to this day, blackened by the fires lighted for their destruction—an imperishable witness of the ancient animosities of the old Gothic and Frank races, which, though eventually reconciled, have never thoroughly amalgamated.

The Provençals, how greatly soever they might have suffered in these transactions, were certainly not subdued. The presence of Charles Martel being required in the following year to suppress a revolt of the Saxons, Mauronte and his partisans seized the opportunity to re-enter Avignon, and drive thence a second garrison of Franks. Charles was enraged beyond measure, and swore to take ample vengeance. He hastened from Germany, stormed Avignon, and put the population to the sword; crossed the Durance, attacked and captured Arles and Marseilles; drove the Arabs from all the towns and fortresses they had taken, and compelled Mauronte, the champion of Provençal independence, to abandon his country to its fate. A few scattered bands of wandering Arabs endeavoured to maintain themselves for awhile among the steep rocks and pine forests of Garde-Fraisnet; but they were hunted down like wild beasts, and finally expelled from Gaul, or exterminated. France was thus freed from the presence of the infidels, and Provence and Septimania thenceforth became integral parts of its Empire.

In this last contest, the troops of Luitprand, King of the Lombards, had taken part with those of Charles, notwithstanding the difference of their creed and sympathies. A close friendship, indeed, had grown up between the chiefs, which it was the interest of both to strengthen, as the hostility of

either might have been fatal to the designs of the other. While Charles aimed at extending his dominion over the whole of France, Luitprand was engaged in subjugating Italy. Circumstances had been generally favourable to each, and their alliance was calculated to diminish the obstacles which remained to be surmounted in their career. The reigning Pope, Gregory III., however, sought about this time to sow dissension between them. A hot dispute had arisen between the Pontiff and the Emperor, Leo the Isaurian, concerning the worship of images. Leo had published an edict, ordering their removal from all churches and sacred edifices throughout his dominions, and directing them to be destroyed. Hence he and his supporters were called Iconoclasts. The Pope, on the other hand, approved the use of the forbidden symbols; and after a controversy, by which the Catholic world was split into factions, the contending parties came to open violence. Italy was rent and disturbed from end to end, and became a scene of the most furious commotion and outrage. The Lombards, in the midst of the confusion, seized upon the Exarchate of Ravenna, the last remnant of the Empire of the West which pertained to the successors of Constantine; and even Rome itself, of which Gregory held the real sovereignty, though the city was nominally comprised in the Exarchate, was nearly surrounded by the followers of the Arian Luitprand, and threatened with siege. The Pontiff, in this strait, implored aid from the Emperor, but in vain; and, failing there, he was compelled to sue for protection to Charles Martel, the friend of the Lombards, but at the same time the patron of the Missionaries, who were then engaged in the conversion of Germany.

Gregory's envoys arrived at the French court, in the year 740—"the year without war" in the reign of Charles Martel—when the hero, having vanquished the Arabs, the Provençals, the Saxons, the Allemanni, the Frisons and the Bretons, who had taken part in the general conflict, and restored peace to his subjects from the Weser and Danube to the Pyrenees, reposed from his labours in his palace at Kiersy-sur-Oise. The clerical messengers were the bearers of a letter from the holy father, the beginning of which ran as follows:—"We are personally afflicted with many tribulations, but our tears flow day and night from our eyes, when we see the church abandoned on all sides by those of her children from whom she most hoped for defence and protection." The closing sentence of this memorable epistle read thus:—"Ancard, one of our vassals, who is the bearer of this letter, will personally inform your Excellency of what he has seen with his own eyes, and what we have directed him to say to you. I once more implore your goodwill, before God, who is witness of what I say, and who will be our judge, that you may hasten to sooth our sorrows, or at the least, to send us an answer in which we may rejoice; to the end, that with pleasure we may implore God for you and for your subjects, before the tombs of the holy apostles St. Peter and St. Paul." Flattering, however, and pressing as was this appeal, it was insufficient to make Charles forget the ties and services which bound

him to Luitprand. He merely offered his mediation, and this, as there was no alternative, being accepted, the Lombard army withdrew from the gates of Rome, and left the Sovereign Pontiff unmolested. The friendship of Luitprand and Charles was thus increased rather than diminished; and Pepin, the eldest son of Charles, who was about this time associated with his father in the government, was sworn to maintain through life the same league and amity with so dear and valuable an ally.

Gregory III. was the only party dissatisfied with the result. He abhorred the Arians, not more perhaps for their heresy, than on account of his own fears; and he desired to make Charles their determined enemy. To effect this, he sent, in the following year, a new embassy into France, bearing as a



present to the prince the keys of the tomb of St. Peter, with part of the chains the apostle had worn for his maintenance of the faith; together with rich and precious gifts for the most distinguished of the Frank leudes. On this occasion, the Pope tried a more tempting bait on his "faithful and affectionate son," than he had before ventured to employ. It consisted of an offer to recognise Charles as Consul of Rome and Emperor of the West. The pride and ambition of the warrior were touched by this magnificent proposal, and he lost no time in despatching the abbot of Corbie, and a monk of St. Denis, with a flattering answer. The correspondence, at this interesting point, was closed by the demise, about the same time, of Charles

Martel and the Pontiff, or it is not improbable that the former would have anticipated the title which was afterwards assumed by his grandson.

Charles at his death, in October 741, was but fifty years of age; being cut off thus early by the weight of infirmities, contracted amid the hardships of his laborious life. He was a constant hard worker, and to his vigilance, prudence and activity, no less than to his valour and talent, he was indebted for his elevation from a prison to a power surpassing that of most of the monarchs of his age. He is chargeable with many cruelties; but, in his age, cruelty was scarcely a vice, and, at all events, he does not appear to have been a wanton shedder of blood. His victories gave internal repose to France, and increased her importance in the scale of nations—no slight advantage to her commercial interests, of which we gather some scattered allusions from the Continuator of Fredegarius, who speaks of the power and influence of the fleets of the Franks in the Mediterranean.

The almost constant warfare in which Charles was engaged, occasioned immense expense to the nation, and as there was no regular mode of raising taxes, and the requisite aids fell heavily on the people, the ruler, to avoid increasing their burdens, had recourse to the clergy, who had heretofore been exempt from imposts. He declared that the wars against the Saracens were to be regarded as religious wars; and being in defence of the church, he thought it reasonable that ecclesiastics should bear a fair proportion of their cost. He demanded, therefore, that all bishops and abbots throughout the realm, should either take the field at the head of their lay vassals, or contribute in money and provisions a sum equivalent to their services, and sufficient for the maintenance and encouragement of those by whom their places were to be supplied. Some of the clergy chose personal service in preference to parting with their wealth, or indeed, from the martial tendency of the times, their choice may have been influenced purely by inclination. The requisition, however, irritated the ecclesiastical body, and several of its writers have spoken with much bitterness against Charles. According to Hincmar, it was publicly said by many of the clergy after the prince's death, that he was suffering torment for his offences against the church in the infernal regions. These preachers, it is charitable to assume, had forgotten that, but for the exertions of Charles, they and their church would in all probability have been exterminated by the infidel invaders of France.

By his will Charles divided his realm among the two sons of his first marriage, Pepin and Carloman. The eldest had Neustria, Burgundy and Provence; and the youngest Austrasia, and the tributary states of Germany. This division, it is believed, had been sanctioned by the States assembled for that purpose before the death of Charles. Grippon, the son of a second marriage with Sonnichilde, niece of Odilon, Duke of Bavaria, had no part of the kingdom; but his mother, taking advantage of the absence of Pepin on an expedition into Burgundy, which was still in a state of ferment, procured for her son the government of several important provinces, taken from the

assigned dominions of his brothers. This change in the intention of Charles was the source of much future vexation and of many quarrels. Pepin at once protested against the donation, and was supported by Carloman and the leudes of the two kingdoms, who had been taught to look with distrust and anxiety upon matters involving a disputed sovereignty. But no active steps were taken on either side till after the death of Charles, when Pepin and Carloman at once resorted to arms to compel the renunciation by Grippon of the territories conferred upon him; and a scene of universal violence and disorder ensued. Grippon, indifferently supported by the population of his territories, and unable to make head against the combined forces of his brothers, took refuge in the city of Laon, which, after a brave but ineffectual defence, surrendered, and the prince was sent prisoner to Neuf-Châtel, in the Ardennes; while Sonnichilde, his mother, who was captured with him, was confined to a cell in the monastery of Chelles.

The defeat of Grippon, however, did not terminate the contest to which the assertion of his claims had given rise. The tributary states of Germany and the subjugated provinces of the south, the moment they saw their rulers engaged in intestine war, rose in revolt. The Provençals drove the Frank governors from their cities. Odilon, to avenge the quarrel of his niece, aroused the ancient pride and ire of the Bavarians and Allemanni; and Hunald, the son of Eudes, with the sanction of the Aquitanian nobles, not only refused to do homage to Pepin, but formed a strict alliance with Odilon. The reign of anarchy seemed about to recommence and spread through all the dominions of the Franks. Nothing but the close union and friendship of the two elder sons of Charles Martel could have saved the country from devastation. But these, more politic than the princes of the Merovingian race, united their troops and prepared with energy to enforce their pretensions. The Aquitanians were first humiliated, and immediately afterwards the Bavarians and Allemanni were reduced to subjection. Victory constantly followed the banners of Carloman and Pepin, and the vanquished everywhere returned—often at the mere rumour of their approach—to allegiance.

“Henceforth,” says Laurentie, “Austrasia maintained its independence under the government of Carloman. It seemed a separate principality, in which the duke performed the functions of king. His civil administration was no less able than his military conduct, and, as soon as the return of peace permitted, he earnestly applied himself to repair the ravages of war. In order to calm the resentments of the clergy and leudes, he assembled a council at the palace of Estines, near Binches, in Hainault; the acts of which have all the semblance of acts of a sovereignty, recognised as legal by the bishops and nobles. The position of the two brothers in this respect was perfectly distinct, though the distinction cannot be explained by any diversity of political interests between them, or by the difference of local situation in the two countries.” In the council held at Soissons in 744, it may be observed, the date given is that of the reign of Childeric III., while in the Austrasian council, Carloman

is represented as reigning prince, under the title of Duke and Prince of the Franks. Hence it appears certain that the Merovingian race had less share in the affections of the people of Eastern than of Western France, and that with the former there was no decided obstacle to a change of dynasty. It is believed that this difference of feeling had its origin in the convulsions which marked the period, and in the course of which the population west of the Rhine had been in a great measure displaced by the tribes from the east, who in turn were incessantly driven onward by the Germans and Slavonians. It was a strange fact in the midst of this complication of remarkable events, that, when the crown seemed about to settle on his head, Carloman voluntarily resigned his rank and power, and retired into the gloomy seclusion of a monastery.

Meanwhile great, though it would be erroneous to say important, changes had taken place among the *Rois fainéants* throughout France. Dagobert III. had died soon after his accession, and been succeeded by Chilperic II. who died at Noyon in 721, and was followed by Thierry IV., a supposed son of Dagobert III. It is needless to add that these were scarcely sovereigns even in name, for, except when their presence was required in a pageant, they were never seen nor heard of by the people. Thierry died in 737, and was succeeded, after an interregnum of six years, by Childeric III., the last of the Merovingians. The mode of royal succession appears to have been wholly regulated by the mayors of the palace, and it is difficult on some occasions to ascertain the descent or consanguinity of the nominal king. During the reign of Charles Martel, a pretender, called Clotaire IV., had been proclaimed in opposition to Dagobert III., but being soon afterwards deposed to make room for Chilperic II., the crown thenceforth is believed to have remained on the brows of the descendants of Clovis till the extinction of their family. The accession, death, or dethronement of a king was unnoticed; and indeed it appears that the first intimation the people obtained of such events was not unfrequently the apparition at a general assembly of a new sovereign.

The retirement of Carloman from his government, however, was an event of infinitely greater moment than the changes of such kings. He possessed the actual sovereignty of Austrasia, and his withdrawal consequently occasioned not merely an alteration in the name prefixed to decrees and capitularies, but in the government and prospects of the nation itself. It occurred in the year 745, previously to which period it had become a passion with the morbid and melancholy to renounce the world and its vanities, and to seek for that repose, which not the turmoil of active life, but their own yearning and dissatisfied spirits forbade them elsewhere to enjoy, in the seclusion of a monastery. Thus it was with Carloman. While the throne was encompassed with obstacles it had appeared as a prize worth attaining, but now that it was within his grasp, it had lost its charm; and between disgust and mistaken piety he resolved to devote the remainder of his days to prayer and meditation, which

were for many ages deemed more acceptable to God than a faithful discharge of the sterner duties of humanity. The prince, after a formal resignation in behalf of his brother Pepin, departed with a numerous escort of nobles and attendants for Rome, which he quitted, after a short stay, for a residence nearly as brief in a convent on Mount Soracte, a few leagues from the city, and thence he went to assume the garb and take the oaths of a monk of the order of St.



Benedict, in the celebrated monastery of Mount Cassino, where, with the exception of a brief interval, he wasted the rest of his life. Duke Hunald of Aquitaine, about the same period followed his example. A reason, which does not appear to be improbable, has been assigned for the retirement of Hunald. Feeling that it required stronger hands and an abler head than his own to defend the independence of Aquitaine against the growing power and ambition of the house of Heristal, and recognising the required superiority in his son Waifre, he made no hesitation in ceding to him the post which his talents qualified him to fill beneficially to his country and with distinction to himself. It certainly was not merely religious motives which induced Hunald to withdraw from the world; or his notions of Christianity must have been more crude than those of most men, even in the strangely superstitious and degenerate age in which he lived. He had a brother named Hatton, whose claims to the sovereignty of Aquitaine were scarcely inferior

to his, and who, there was reason to apprehend, would at his retirement endeavour to assert his rights in opposition to prince Waifre. In order to prevent any hostile interference of this kind, Hunald invited Hatton to Bordeaux, which then contained the ducal residence, and after causing his eyes to be put out, threw him into prison, which he was never destined to leave. This was the last act of power exercised by the duke, who immediately afterwards took an affectionate farewell of his wife and son, and went to a monastery in the Isle of Rhé, in which his father lay buried, and where he assumed the habit of a monk.

The accession of Waifre, it is said, afforded some disquietude to Pepin, who was not ignorant of his talents and character, nor of the reasons which had induced his father to relinquish his government. As no overt act had been committed, however, and the new duke does not appear to have even refused the oath of allegiance to the king of the Franks, imposed upon his father and grandfather, Pepin was content to wait his opportunity to test the skill and courage of the young prince; and in the meantime other events demanded the exercise of his talents and enterprise.

The retirement of Carloman having left the direction of affairs exclusively to Pepin, he recalled his brother Grippon, who was still a prisoner at Neuf-Châtel, to court, and loaded him with wealth and honours; but in doing so he merely afforded the ungrateful young man a new opportunity for the exercise of his ambition and turbulence. The object at which Grippon aimed was the uncontrolled sovereignty of Austrasia, and with nothing less could he be satisfied. This, perhaps, was natural in him; but Pepin, knowing his incapacity to govern, could not accede to wishes the compliance with which would have endangered the stability of his own power, and blighted the prospects of his family. Grippon did not brood long over his disappointment, but forming a party among the leudes, many of whom were jealous of the authority of Pepin, and assuring himself of the co-operation of the Saxons, who were constantly discontented and ready on any occasion to revolt, he suddenly departed from court with a number of his partisans and their vassals, appointed a general rendezvous on the banks of the Weser, and set up the standard of insurrection [747]. Part of Thuringia was pillaged and devastated by the insurgents, but they had no time to mature their plans or concert efficient measures for systematic hostilities. Pepin had no sooner gained intelligence of the outbreak than he hastened to the scene of action, collected in his progress an army of one hundred thousand Venedes, and burst upon the revolted territory with the sweep and might of a thunderstorm. Saxony was made to suffer severely for its revolt. During four years Pepin delivered it to the plunder and ravage of the Venedes, who lived at discretion among the inhabitants, and succeeded in tranquillising the country by reducing it to the condition of a wilderness. Those who escaped death were compelled to become Christians, the walls of their towns and fortresses were razed to the ground, and their chiefs were carried away into captivity.

Gripon, the cause of the war, finding that his brother demanded his delivery as a prisoner, contrived to escape with a great portion of his followers to Bavaria, where the death of his maternal grandfather, Odilon, opened at this time a new field for his restless ambition. He gathered in his march a large army of Saxons and Allemanni, and this was further increased by a new band of Franks under the command of a leude, named Suger, who on his arrival captured the Duchess Histrude and her son, the celebrated Tassillon, and caused Gripon to be at once recognised as Duke of Bavaria. This second project, like the first, however, was defeated through the activity of Pepin, who routed the Bavarians, made his brother prisoner, and restored to Tassillon the inheritance of his father. Gripon had little to hope from the clemency of Pepin; but the latter, who was neither cruel nor vindictive, readily forgave him, and continued to treat him as a brother. He assigned to him a court and retinue in the city of Mans, which he conferred upon him in sovereignty, with the title of duke, and gave him, at the same time, precedence over the twelve counts of Neustria [748].

The brief interval of tranquillity which ensued was seized by Pepin as a favourable opportunity for realising his designs upon the crown of France. Childeric, though like his predecessors he had been brought forward as king upon state occasions, had, like them, been generally kept close prisoner in his palace, and a rumour had been promulgated that he was of imbecile intellect. Pepin, on the contrary, had at all times displayed the utmost skill, valour, and prudence, in the conduct of his many warlike expeditions; and his civil administration had been marked throughout by the profoundest judgment, ability, and vigour, tempered by justice, mildness, and mercy. He had studiously sought to repress all violence and disorder throughout the realm; had afforded security to property, and exhibited the disposition and the power to punish transgressors, whatever might be their rank or influence. By these means he had gained the good will of the whole population of France, with the exception of a few leudes, who regretted "the good old times" when every man made his own laws, and was his own judge and avenger. He was regarded as sovereign throughout the territory subject to his rule; but he felt that till he was recognised as such by the combined voices of the nobles and the people, and his title was sanctioned by the clergy, his throne would have an insecure basis, and might be overturned with the first storm that should arise. He desired to legalise his pretensions, and thus secure to his children the inheritance which he and his ancestors had won.

He might, there is little doubt, have deposed Childeric with scarcely a breath of opposition, but he chose to proceed in the business with his usual caution. He had long sought the favour of the pope; not servilely or by sycophantic flatteries, but by little services rendered when least expected, and such as were calculated at once to display his power, his generosity, and his reverence for the head of the church. This was in every way politic. The pope's authority was regarded by ecclesiastics as being superior to that

of any temporal potentate, and the papal decrees consequently, being lauded from the pulpit, had immense weight with the people. The reigning pope, Zachary, was still engaged in a controversy with the Iconoclasts, and was threatened on the one hand by the emperor and on the other with the Lombards, who were Arians. The Saracens were masters of the whole of Spain, and great part of the population of Germany still worshipped their northern gods and rejected Christianity. Pepin therefore was the only hope of the successor of St. Peter; and it was a matter of mutual convenience that the house of Heristal should accommodate the pope, and the pope lend a favourable ear to the desires of the Frankish chief. Having gained to his interest Boniface, archbishop of Mayence,—since canonised and known as the great apostle of Germany—who was at once the most zealous and popular of the clergy of the time, and the most intimately connected with the pope, Pepin imparted to that prelate his views and wishes, and through his instrumentality sent private proposals to Rome respecting the legality of the contemplated usurpation. Lulle, a trusty clerk in the suite of Boniface, was deputed to the mission—it being given out on his departure, that the archbishop desired a solution of some difficult theological questions. Lulle acquitted himself satisfactorily, and Zachary's answer was favourable to the designs of Pepin, who on receiving it opened the question in form, and sent as ambassadors to his holiness, Burcard, bishop of Wirzburg, and Sulrade, abbot of St. Denis, charged to propose this question to the sovereign pontiff: "Whether, considering the state of Europe, the nominal ought to be divided from the real source of authority in France? Or, considering the incapacity of Childeric, the renown of Pepin's family for a century past, and the fame and known ability of Pepin himself, whether he ought not, having so long been in possession of the actual power, to assume now the rank and title of king?"

The time taken to deliberate on this grave question was of course a matter of form, and to save appearances. The answer of Zachary was to the effect that "having duly weighed the matter submitted to him, he had decided, that under the advice and consent of the Franks, and with the apostolic authority, the illustrious Pepin, by the election of the whole of France, the consecration of the bishops and the acceptance of the nobles, might be chosen king according to ancient custom, and should be consecrated to that high dignity by the holy hands of Boniface, and anointed in the church of Soissons; and that for Childeric, who was but a pretended king, he should be shaven, and placed in the convent of St. Omer."

Pepin, upon receipt of this answer, lost no time before assembling the states of the realm [751-2]. The business for which the meeting was called was introduced and conducted by the friends of the proposed monarch, who after enumerating the services of Pepin and his ancestors, adverting to the peace and prosperity with which the empire had been blessed in consequence of their exertions, the danger to be apprehended from the Saracens, from the surrounding tributary nations, now overawed by the vigilance of Pepin, and

the probability of a period of anarchy occurring at his death. urged that it was wise, prudent, and perfectly justifiable, in order to secure the well-being of the state, to confer on the possessor of so much talent, energy, and patriotic feeling, the highest reward a nation could bestow. That in short, it was the common duty as well as interest to beg the acceptance by the noble Pepin of the crown of France, for himself and his descendants. Childeric, it was said, should be in the mean time provided for as became his rank and his capacity; and for any religious scruples that might otherwise have arisen, it was announced that the pope had already sanctioned the measure and had advised the calling of that assembly.

So well had the people been prepared by the conciliating and judicious conduct of Pepin for the contemplated change of dynasty, that not a voice was raised in behalf of the unfortunate *Roi fainéant*; not a solitary friend in the meeting put in a plea for him or his young son. An universal shout of approbation rent the air when the proposal was formally made for proclaiming Pepin king; and he was forthwith raised on a shield and exhibited as monarch of France to the admiring multitude. In order, however, to satisfy the injunctions of the pope, and at the same time to impart additional solemnity to the transaction, preparations were immediately made for the inauguration and coronation of the new sovereign with religious rites and ceremonials. Boniface officiated on the occasion, and anointed and consecrated the new king after the manner of the ancient kings of Israel, at the same time requiring from him an oath to govern his people righteously, and to protect the church. This is believed to have been the first coronation of a Frank king, in which the unction and consecration were used. The preceding monarchs had been inaugurated in the same manner as Clovis, simply by being exhibited to the army and the population, elevated on a shield. Childeric, the last of the Merovingian kings, immediately afterwards had his royal locks shorn, and was conducted to a monastery, where he died at the end of three or four years. His son was likewise withdrawn at the same time from the eye of the world, and passed his life in religious seclusion.

But though the election of Pepin had appeared to be with the unanimous assent of the Franks, this was not the case in fact. Neustria, the population of which had drawn less blood from the German stock, still retained some degree of attachment to the Merovingian race, or rather, perhaps, to the ancient customs and laws which that race represented, and which, like most things, seemed better in the retrospect and through the medium of tradition than during the period of their activity. Hence the inhabitants were disposed to look with jealousy, if not disaffection, upon the growing power and assumption of the Austrasians, from among whom the family of Heristal had arisen. The revolution was felt to be complete. King Clovis had been the leader of a band of freemen, the chief magistrate and president of a military republic, in which, as evinced by the dispute concerning the vase of Soissons, "he could claim nothing but what fell to his lot;" but king

Pepin became at once an autocrat, the monarch of a settled nation, the arbiter of the fate and fortune of all over whom he could establish his dominion. In resisting his rule, therefore, the Neustrians were asserting their own freedom, as well as exhibiting their attachment to their fallen princes; while the Austrasians, in supporting their chief, were but enacting a similar part to that which had won for the conquering followers of Clovis the broad lands which their descendants occupied. Under these circumstances most of the Neustrian leudes refused to yield obedience to the new king; and their example was naturally followed by the Aquitanians, who regarded their own prince, Waifre, a Merovingian, as better entitled to fill the throne of the Franks than an Austrasian duke. The Bretons and the Saxons also, though they had submitted to the authority of Pepin in his capacity of mayor, would not recognise him as their suzerain in his own right, and a general outbreak of discontented subjects and tributaries ensued. Even Grippon, the half-brother of the king, whom neither pardon for his alleged offences, nor the atonement of royal favours, could reconcile to deprivation of his birth-right, joined the disaffected, and led his vassals to the camp of the Duke of Aquitaine to make war on "the usurper."

This multiplication of difficulties, instead of dismaying, served but to increase the energy and activity of Pepin. He marched first against the Saxons, whom he speedily defeated, and upon whom he imposed the hard but politic condition of forsaking their ancient gods, and adopting Christianity, thus severing themselves from the remoter German tribes with whom they had been hitherto united by the strong ties of common religion and language. He next advanced against the Bretons, who submitted after the capture of Vannes; and then turning towards Aquitaine, he demanded the delivery into his hands of Grippon, under pain of having the territory of Waifre ravaged by an invading army. Such threats had never been idly made by Pepin, and Waifre and Grippon trembled when this was announced; but their anxiety was speedily relieved by news that the Franks had changed their destination and were bound for Italy, where it was hoped the animosity of the Lombards on account of Pepin's alliance with the pope, would furnish them ample employ for some time to come. Grippon, in order not to lose an opportunity of vengeance, immediately departed from Toulouse for the purpose of inciting the Lombard king to hostilities; but his journey and its object being made known to Pepin, he was waylaid by two Frank counts and their vassals at St. Jean de Maurienne, near the Alps, and perished in an attempt to force a passage for himself and his followers. Pepin meanwhile halted in Septimania, where Ansemond, a Gothic noble, whom the Saracens had appointed to the government of Nîmes, Béziers, Agde, and Maguelonne, opened to him the gates of those four cities, and enabled him for the first time to gain for the Franks a permanent footing in the country. This was an unexpected blow to the hopes of Waifre. Aquitaine was menaced and laid open along its entire frontier; and the population were so shaken by fear that the advance

of a powerful army was all that was needed to ensure a conquest of the country. Before accomplishing this easy task, however, Pepin undertook another, and, to appearance, a more difficult labour.

Pope Zachary had died shortly after the coronation of Pepin, and Stephen II., his successor, had already given place to Stephen III. The Lombard throne also had undergone a change of occupants. Luitprand was dead, and his eldest son Rachis had relinquished his sceptre and iron crown, and retired to the royal monastery of Mount Cassino, leaving his realm to his brother Astolphus, who commenced his reign by reconquering Ravenna and its dependencies, which his father had restored to the sovereign pontiff at the intercession of Charles Martel. Rome itself was again threatened by the haughty and powerful Arians; and the pope had in vain endeavoured to interest the emperor Constantine Copronimus in the salvation of the Holy—the Eternal city. Stephen, in his distress, tried every expedient he could devise in order to avert the doom which seemed impending. He wrote letters to Pepin to implore his aid, and sent embassies of monks and bishops to Pavia, to soothe the ire and modify the ambition of the Lombard king; but the letters were intercepted on the way, and the ambassadors were treated with scorn and contempt. He threatened the denunciation of Heaven on the invader of the tombs of the apostles and saints, and appeared one day on the walls of Rome with naked feet, and ashes strewn over his pontifical robes,



bearing on high a cross, to which was attached a broken treaty of Astolphus. But all was in vain; and as a last resource, Stephen, to adopt the language of

Gibbon, resolved on "visiting in person the courts of Lombardy and France, to deprecate the injustice of his enemy, and to excite the pity and indignation of his friend. After soothing the public despair of the Romans by litanies and orations, he undertook this laborious journey with the ambassadors of the French monarch and the Greek emperor. The king of the Lombards was inexorable; but his threats could not silence the complaints nor retard the speed of the Roman pontiff, who traversed the Pennine Alps, reposed in the abbey of St. Maurice, and hastened to grasp the right hand of his protector—a hand which was never lifted in vain either in war or friendship." Pepin, who had been secretly informed by a Frank pilgrim of the approach of the holy father, sent an escort to conduct him to his presence.

The first interview between these memorable personages took place at Pontyon, in the Pertois, in the year 754. Anastasius, in his 'History of the Popes,' says, that at their meeting Pepin prostrated himself on the earth before Stephen, and led his mule by the bridle to his quarters. Theophanes, in his Chronicle, describes the king as being agitated with remorse on account of his usurpation, as praying earnestly for absolution, and receiving it with great ceremony. The author of 'The Annales de Metz,' represents the pope in sackcloth and ashes at the feet of Pepin, supplicating for the deliverance of Rome. And the second continuator of Fredegarius, who was a contemporary, and probably an eye-witness of the scene, simply relates that "Stephen, being brought into the king's presence, distributed many presents to him and his people, and requested their aid against King Astolphus and the Lombard nation." It is admitted by all that Pepin received the pontiff with the greatest respect and kindness, promised him a speedy restoration to the chair of St. Peter, and caused him to be lodged, with befitting attendance, in the abbey of St. Denis, where he remained for several months an object of reverential curiosity and devotion to all classes of the superstitious Franks. Pepin availed himself of so favourable an opportunity to obtain a solemn and impressive ratification of the regal title which he had assumed. Stephen consecrated, anointed, and crowned him anew in presence of the nobles, the clergy, and the people; proclaimed him as the true and only king of the Franks, and eldest son of the church; and denounced excommunication and a terrible anathema against every man and his posterity who should dare to attempt to dethrone the reigning prince, or hinder the succession of his right heirs. We may believe that these denunciations were specially dictated by Pepin, who was anxious lest his own example in deposing Childeric should be drawn into a precedent against himself or his children. The assertors of *Divine right*, and Hope, are careful to deprive the past of all perspective authority.

Astolphus meanwhile had not been idle. Before the winter was far advanced he had obtained possession of all the towns and open country about Rome; and the city had ceased to offer even a shew of defence, when intelligence came of the manner in which Pepin had received the pontiff, and the promise which he had given of speedy succour. The Lombard king paused

in mid career. He knew the formidable power of the Frank sovereign, and was unwilling to provoke his anger; but, at the same time, he was desirous to retain what he had won. He endeavoured to negotiate, but his ambassadors were received coldly, and superciliously dismissed. He appealed to Carloman, the brother of Pepin, and by promises and entreaties prevailed on the princely



monk to undertake a journey into France for the purpose of counteracting the representations and influence of Stephen, and dissuading the king from intermeddling in the affairs of Italy. The efforts of Carloman, who appears to have executed his task with sincerity and good faith, were unsuccessful. Pepin had resolved to become the protector of the holy see, and may be fairly suspected of having conceived a design of establishing his power over the Lombard states. He is represented as having taken offence at the zeal of his brother, whose talents, former rank, and reputation for piety, were likely to operate injuriously upon the leudes; and he commanded him to desist from his entreaties, seeing that, as a monk, his interests were identical with those of the pope, to whose jurisdiction he was in all things subject. It has even been intimated that the king so deeply resented the interference of his brother, as to have conspired against his life and against the liberty of his family; and it is at least certain that Carloman died shortly afterwards, either in France, or during his return to Mount Cassino. Nevertheless, the impression made by the arguments and remonstrances of the prince induced Pepin to send a messenger to the court of Astolphus; but on so haughty an errand that a favourable answer could not have been expected, and in all

probability was not desired. The Lombards were formally ordered to retire from Rome, and to abandon all their designs of conquest upon the territories of the pope; and, compliance with the mandate being refused, the Franks prepared with the utmost expedition for war [755].

"King Pepin," says the second continuator of Fredegarius, "having failed to obtain what he demanded by his envoys, and the year having elapsed, the king ordained that all the Franks should assemble in the calends of March, according to the custom of the Franks, at the royal house of Braine. Here, having held counsel with his chiefs, at the period when kings were wont to go forth to battle, he put himself in motion, accompanied by Pope Stephen, and all the nations dwelling within the bounds of his empire, and the battalions of the Franks; and drawing nigh with a great host to the frontiers of Lombardy, they arrived together at Maurienne. Astolphus, King of the Lombards, at that news assembled all the army of his nation, and marched to the pass called the Valley of Suza, where having encamped, he strove with all the might of his troops and engines to support the violence which he had unjustly done to the republic and the holy see of Rome. Pepin, meanwhile, had halted with his followers at Maurienne, being stayed by the entanglements of the valley and the height of the mountains. But at length, some of the soldiers of his army debouching by the narrow passes, began to descend into the Valley of Suza; at sight of whom King Astolphus caused all his Lombards to arm and brought them down boldly to the assault, The Franks did not trust for safety solely to the strength of their arms, but first invoked the assistance of God, and of his blessed apostle St. Peter, and then entered into the action and fought courageously. But King Astolphus, seeing that his army was beaten, turned his back and fled, after having lost in that battle nearly all the troops that he had brought with him—the dukes, the counts, and the elders of the Lombard nation: and he himself escaped with great difficulty by scaling a rock, and finally reached Pavia with but a small remnant of his people.

"The illustrious King Pepin, to whom God had given the victory, advanced to the gates of Pavia with the numerous battalions of his army, and encamping under the walls of the city, ravaged all the surrounding country. He delivered the houses through all that part of Italy to the flames, laid waste the fields and vineyards, plundered all the strong places of the Lombards, and took immense treasures of gold and silver, with a multitude of ornaments, and all the tents; till at length King Astolphus, seeing that he could no longer escape destruction, solicited peace through the mediation of priests, and of the Frank chiefs; executed all the commands of Pepin; and in order the more perfectly to make compensation for the evil which he had iniquitously done to the church of Rome and to the apostolic see, he engaged himself by oath, and by giving of hostages, never to throw off the suzerainty of the Franks, nor draw nigh again in arms to the republic, or the apostolic city of Rome. King Pepin, in his clemency, left to him his life and his realm: and King Astolphus distributed a great number of presents among the Franks, and

numerous largesses to their nobles and chiefs. King Pepin after that sent Pope Stephen with great honour to Rome, with his attendants and many rich presents, and re-established him, with that tranquillity in which he rejoiced exceedingly, in the apostle's seat. These things accomplished, King Pepin and his army returned home, with the aid of God, laden with treasures and presents."

Astolphus, urged by fear while his terrible enemy was battering at the gates of Pavia, had promised to relinquish his hold upon all the territory formerly comprised in the Exarchate of Ravenna, which Pepin, with consent of his leudes and freemen, had conferred in sovereignty on the pope; an act which laid the foundation of the temporal power of the pontiffs. When the protectors of Stephen, however, had withdrawn, the Lombard king bethought him that he had purchased peace too dearly, and instead of fulfilling the terms of his treaty and delivering up Ravenna, he returned and laid siege once more to Rome itself. On the 1st of January in the year 756, the Romans suddenly saw their city closely invested; all the avenues being so well secured that until the fifty-fifth day of the siege Stephen could not even dispatch a messenger after the king of the Franks to inform him of what had happened.

Pepin had already crossed the Alps at the date of these occurrences, and he did not consequently gain immediate intelligence concerning them. Meanwhile, he received an embassy from Constantinople, bearing rich presents and grateful acknowledgments from the emperor, for his services against the Lombards, and requesting that Ravenna might be restored to the Imperial dominions. The Frank answered as became him: that the desire was unreasonable. The emperor had taken no steps for the recovery of the Exarchate, which to him, therefore, was now irrevocably lost; and Pepin having obtained it by the treaty of Pavia, had, under the right he had acquired by conquest, given it unconditionally to the pope. "Neither ambition, nor interest, nor any other motive," said Pepin, "save only the safety and welfare of the church, induced me to make war against the Lombards; and such being my motives, the fruits of my enterprise belong of right to the church. I have plighted my troth to this effect, and no power on earth shall alter my resolution." Presently afterwards came news of Astolphus' breach of faith. The camp of the Franks was instantly broken up, and the van of their army turned once more towards the banks of the Po. All was hurry and preparation for a renewal of the war; and the Greek ambassadors departed to foment the troubles of Italy, which they clearly discerned was effectually wrested from the hands of their master. The intrigues of the Byzantine court from that time forth were constantly exerted in behalf of the Lombards, even till the end of the reign of Charlemagne.

The danger in which Stephen was placed by his implacable enemy, who burned to avenge the humiliation inflicted on him, rendered him impatient at what seemed the long delay of his son and defender. He wrote an earnest and eloquent letter to Pepin in his own name urging him to hasten to the

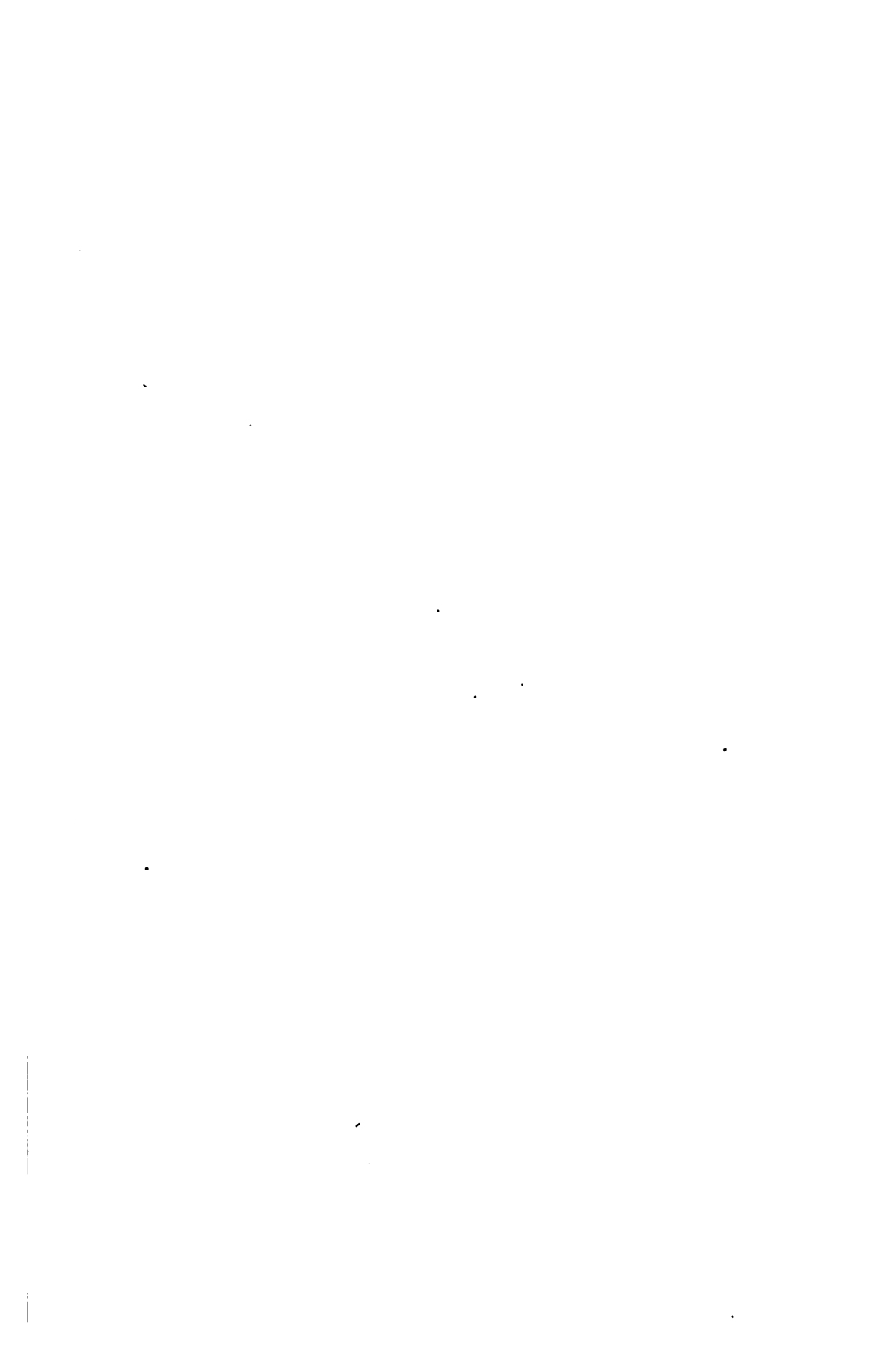
relief of the holy city; and he enforced his request by a second letter—preserved in the ‘*Cordex Carolinus*’—written in the name and person of the apostle St. Peter, who was made to assure “his adoptive children, the king, the clergy and the nobles of France, that, though dead in the flesh, he was still alive in the spirit; that his were the commands of the founder and guardian of the Roman church; that the Holy Virgin, the angels, saints, martyrs, and all the host of heaven, unanimously urged the request, and would confess the obligation; that riches, victory, and heaven itself would crown their pious enterprise, and that eternal damnation would await all who should neglect the shrine of the saint, his temple and his people, and suffer them to fall into the hands of the perfidious Lombards.”

Pepin was not tardy in his operations. Leaving Rome to the defence of a small but gallant band of Franks, who had been quartered there in 755, he hastened to Pavia, and laid siege to that city; when Astolphus, seeing that the contest was not likely to terminate favourably for him, sued at once for peace; and agreed, as its price, in addition to fulfilling the treaty of Pavia, to cede the city of Comachio, to defray the costs of the Frank expedition, and to pay for the future a yearly tribute of twelve thousand sous of gold, the amount which, till the time of Clotaire II., was said to have been paid by the Lombards to the Frank sovereigns. These were degrading and hard terms, but Astolphus was compelled to accept them in order to save, for a brief space, the shadow of national independence to his people. Pepin renewed his donations to Stephen of the Imperial Exarchate, which, besides Rome, now comprised Ravenna, Adria, Ferrara, Imola, Fayenza Forli, Rimini, Pesara, Fano, Seniglia, and Ancona, with their territories and dependencies,—an ample endowment for a monarch “whose kingdom was not of this world.” It is believed, nevertheless, that Pepin still retained his rights of suzerainty over the grant; and it is certain that his successors exercised such rights, whether retained or not, without censure or dispute. The king of the Franks then returned with his troops towards the Alps; and the Lombards retired to their capital, where Astolphus shortly afterwards died, in consequence of being violently thrown with his horse against a tree while hunting.

Astolphus left no children; but two competitors immediately started into the field to claim his vacant throne. The one was Rachis, his brother and predecessor, who came forth from his monastery at the solicitation of many of the nobles, to resume the reins of government. The other candidate was Didier, a Lombard duke, who commanded the army at the time of Astolphus’ death. The strongest faction was that which supported the succession of Rachis; Didier therefore had recourse to the intervention of the pope, to whom, in order to bind him to his interest, he promised a full and faithful execution of the treaty of Pavia, and to add to the apostolical patrimony Bologna and its territories. The cupidity of Stephen, who was certainly not infallible when assailed by high temptation, could not resist this glittering bait. He immediately declared for the pretender, and sent to Rachis, who



Death of Astolpus.



appears not to have thought it requisite to obtain absolution from his monastic vows, to reprehend him for deserting his cell and violating the rules to which he had sworn a life-long obedience; and to command his immediate return to his seclusion on Mount Cassino. At the same time the pope informed the Lombards that as they had no alternative but to yield to Didier, supported as he was by the favour of King Pepin, they had better submit in honour and safety than risk a war of which the issue could not be doubtful. Rachis, who does not seem to have possessed any shining talents or much ambition, returned quietly to his convent and resumed his Benedictine robes, and Didier within a few days was universally recognised as king of the Lombards. The nation which had subverted the Roman empire was already prostrate at the feet of the Franks; and, as but too frequently happens in declining states, internal dissensions arose to accelerate its fall. The dukes of Spoleto and Beneventum threw off their allegiance to the Lombard sovereign, and declared themselves independent, "under the protection of the Franks and the church of Rome." Didier dared not seek for vengeance on his rebellious vassals at the moment; but in 758, when all the disposable forces of Pepin were engaged in quelling a general revolt which had broken forth among the Saxons, he no longer hesitated between his oaths and his ambition. Gathering all his followers for fight, he took the road which had been beaten by Luitprand and Astolphus, and Rome again trembled at the approach of an Arian foe. The neighbouring cities and towns were easily captured; but Paul, the brother and successor of Stephen in the pontifical chair, having appealed to Pepin, received timely succour from that king, who sent to Didier his natural brother Remi, Bishop of Rouen, and the Frank Duke Antaire, to threaten him with a third expedition into his country unless he instantly withdrew his troops from the papal territories, and surrendered all the places he had conquered. The Lombards—so abject had repeated humiliations made them—withdrew at a word, and scrupulously obeyed the behest of their suzerain.

The fate of the South of France, meanwhile, whence Pepin had first marched to the relief of the pope, remained still in suspense. A body of Franks yet lay encamped under the walls of Narbonne, where neither the invader nor the assailed seemed desirous to bring on a decisive conflict. In 729, however, Narbonne was surrendered; the last wrecks of the great Saracen army which had descended from the Pyrenees in the confident expectation of being able to conquer and overrun Gaul, were driven back into their strongholds in Spain; and the realm of the Franks was definitely established to the extreme southern bound of ancient Gaul. In Saxony and Italy nothing remained for Pepin to subdue. Tassillon, Duke of Bavaria, not only took an oath of allegiance to the king, but to his two sons, Charles and Carloman. "During two years," says the continuator of Fredegarius, "the land had rest. Waifre remained the sole antagonist of Pepin, and he was wholly unable to avoid or sustain the inevitable shock of arms which were everywhere

victorious." The war which had so long impended burst forth in 760; but not without at least a pretext.

Pepin, though a man of talent, was a strict observer of forms and ceremonies, a stern critic in literals, even if the sense were somewhat wrested in consequence. Accordingly, in order to provide his conscience with a sufficient motive for his meditated deposition of the Duke of Aquitaine, he sent to the court of that prince a solemn embassy, charged to demand the delivery of all the Frank leudes who had sought refuge with Waifre, and that speedy justice should be done to such of the Frank clergy as had been despoiled of their livings in Aquitaine. A haughty refusal was the answer of the prince; and Pepin immediately called together all his leudes at Troyes, and passing through Auxerre, Nevers, and Berry, he entered the territory of Arvernes and carried fire and sword throughout the country. The duke, unprepared for such hasty and resolute measures, was compelled to negotiate. He offered to submit all matters in dispute between them to the judgment of a general assembly; and on giving up two of his relatives, Adalghier and Ithier, as hostages for his fidelity, he obtained the withdrawal of the hostile army. The year following [761], however, Pepin had scarcely dismissed the states, which already met, according to the Carolingian custom, in the month of May, when Waifre suddenly appeared with the Gascon bands on the banks of the Loire; sacked Châlons and Autun, and repassed the river "without having encountered a single Frank lance." But the Franks were not slow to avenge, if they had been unable to prevent, the insult. The plunder of Autun and Châlons were dearly repaid on Chantelle and Bourbon-l'Archambault, whence Pepin proceeded at once to lay siege to Clermont, the capital of Auvergne, which, after a vigorous resistance, was captured and burned—though, according to the annalist of Metz, the destruction was contrary to the orders of the king. In 762 the Franks make a new inroad into the territory of the Aquitanians, and Bourges was besieged; but Count Humbert, to whom Waifre had entrusted the command of the garrison, defended the place so bravely and skilfully that the assailants were unable to gain access till after great part of the wall had been thrown down by the battering rams. The city was finally taken, however, and Pepin proceeded to Tours, which he left, at the end of a few days, "nothing better than a pile of ashes and of ruins." Waifre in vain strove to arrest the victorious and irresistible march of the invaders, by bold and well devised stratagems and forays into the territory of the Franks. Count Maucion, whom he sent with a strong and chosen band into Septimania, was defeated and slain there by the Franks, who occupied the country; and Count Adalard experienced a similar fate in the Lyonnais; while, to crown the humiliation of the Aquitanians, the Count of Poitiers, in an expedition into the territory of Tours, was met and defeated by the vassals of the monastery of St. Martin, and, like his colleague, was left with the greater part of his followers dead on the field of battle. The treachery of a near relative came also about this time to heighten the perplexity and

diminish the chances of success to Waifre. His uncle Remistan led his army over to the camp of Pepin, at the very moment when the latter, in consequence of the lateness of the season, was about to withdraw his forces. The fall of the unhappy duke, however, was retarded by disaffection in the Frank camp. In the expedition of 762, Pepin, after rapidly crossing the country which he had previously ravaged, and which still lay waste, entered the valley of Vienne, and destroyed the vines of Limousin, whence the monasteries then derived their wines. Pursuing this career of spoliation he had already reached the banks of the Dordogne, when Tassillon, the young Duke of Bavaria, recalling, it may be, the old alliance of Odilon his father with the Aquitanians, or more probably tempted by the apparent opportunity of establishing his independence, sought a quarrel with Pepin, whose face he declared he would never see again, and returned with his warriors into his own country. The Franks did not turn back upon this desertion, and even gained a signal victory over Waifre before retiring; but the necessity of watching Tassillon, who about that period strengthened himself by espousing a daughter of the Lombard king, and the general ill-will borne towards them by the Germans, compelled them first to halt, and in the end, to return towards the Rhine, where they were detained for a considerable time by the rebellious movements of the indomitable tributaries.

The tide of war did not roll back to the south till 766, when it recommenced with new fury. Waifre, seeing that his strong places fell one after another, and became rallying points after their capture to the enemy, caused those that remained to be dismantled, and marched to the valley of the Dordogne, where he resolved to await Pepin's attack in the midst of the rocky glens and ravines, where numbers were likely to be of less avail than local knowledge and courage. The king of the Franks, however, was not to be drawn into the snare. Instead of following Waifre into his mountain fastnesses, he spread his troops throughout Aquitaine, and took possession of all the towns and cities in the territory. The nature of this savage and desolating warfare, and the misery which it inflicted upon the people, may be inferred from the fact that the inhabitants abandoned their homes at the approach of the Franks, and preferred a precarious life of freedom among the woods and rocks to the license and outrages of their brutal conquerors. The nation was thus utterly defeated; and from being one of the most fertile provinces in France became a howling wilderness. The land was subdued and the people tranquillised!

Pepin, before troubling himself farther respecting Waifre, seized a few days to return to his capital, during which he presided at the celebrated council of Gentilly—a village near Paris—where the then absorbing question of the worship of images was decided by the Romish clergy. He returned, however, to Aquitaine immediately after the festival of Christmas 767, and before the close of winter rendered himself master of Toulouse, the Albigeois, and Gevaudan. He then ascended to High Auvergne, and took Turenne,

Peirace, and the castle of Scoraille, though built on the summit of a steep mountain. Nothing but defeat and disaster attended the enemies of the Franks, whose victorious banners were displayed from the Atlantic to the Weser and the Alps, and from the German Ocean to the peaks of the Pyrenees.

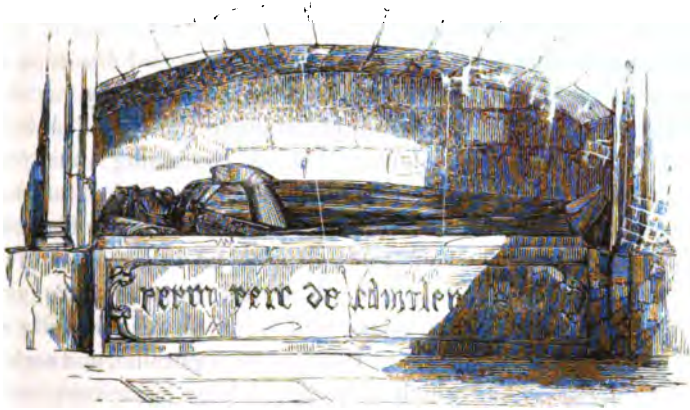
Remistan, to whom some portion of his country's misfortunes were fairly attributable, seems to have been touched at last by the humiliations inflicted on his nephew and the hapless population; and quitting the castle of Argenton, in Berry, the defence of which had been entrusted to him, he put himself at the head of some light troops, and scoured the districts of Limousin and Berry, putting to death all the Franks he could encounter. His repentance was too late. The land was peopled with hostile forces, and in one of his incursions Remistan was captured, conducted before Pepin, and ordered to be hung on the next tree by one of two counts whom he had made prisoners in his forays. The sentence was at once carried into effect under the personal superintendence of the king. Chivalry had not yet established its code of honour; and neither executioner nor spectators felt debased by witnessing, or being instrumental to, the agonised writhings of a helpless soldier, whose chief crime had been that of entering into a friendly alliance with them, in opposition to the interests of his own kinsmen and country.

Waifre no longer attempted to keep the field; but with the broken and dispirited wreck of his army, which still remained faithful, he sought refuge in the Cevennes, and was there enabled for some time longer to maintain himself and to elude the vigilance of the foe, who hunted him from hill to hill, and from cavern to cavern, like a beast of prey; till at last, finding all the avenues to his retreats closed, and his lair itself narrowing, he put himself at the head of a small but devoted band, threw himself upon the enemy, and forcing a passage through their ranks, escaped to the forest of Etobole, (now Ver) near Poitiers, and there, against strong detachments, who beat the forest on all sides, and explored every thicket, continued, "carrying his life in his hand," for more than a month; sometimes disputing a passage with them at the sword's point, and at others lurking in gloomy coverts where even the light of day could scarcely penetrate. This could not last; but the Franks had not the honour or the disgrace of Waifre's death. He fell beneath the steel of a traitor, whom he had entertained among his own followers. A dastard, named Waraton, assassinated him as he slept, one night in the month of July 768, and Aquitaine thenceforward submitted to the yoke of King Pepin.

This, the most obstinately contested, if not the most unjust of his numerous wars, occupied the king till near the time of his death. As he was returning to Paris he was seized at Saintes with a fever, when under the influence of the prevalent superstition he caused himself to be carried first to the tomb of St. Martin, at Tours, and subsequently to that of St. Denis, in the vain hope that a miracle would be wrought for his cure. He died, however, in August

768, and was buried at St. Denis, where in the time of St. Louis a monument was erected to his memory, bearing the inscription

“PEPIN, FATHER OF CHARLEMAGNE.”



The character of Pepin may be best gathered from his acts. He was ambitious and remorseless; but not wantonly cruel. His prudence has passed into a proverb; and his superstition was never perhaps exceeded. In his civil administration it was his policy to appear to give the reins to the national assemblies; but in reality he exercised absolute power by bribing the most influential of the nobles and clergy, and by intimidating the rest. To him papacy was indebted for its temporal power, and for its pretensions to universal sovereignty—the authority to exalt and dethrone princes, and to dispose of kingdoms and people at a word. In person, Pepin was short, insomuch that he was called *Le Bref*; but he was stout, vigorous, and hardy—a warrior fit for the rough times in which he lived. An anecdote related of him shews at least the opinion entertained of his muscular power and courage; and affords at the same time an idea of the popular sports during his reign. At a public exhibition, while a strong lion held a furious bull by the throat almost strangled, the king proposed that some of the company should go forward and rescue the animal. No one, however, durst attempt the act, till Pepin, rising from his seat, leaped into the arena, and with a single stroke of his sword cut off the head of the bull. Then, turning to the spectators he said, “David who slew Goliath was a little man; and Alexander also was of short stature, yet he had more strength and courage than many of his officers who were taller and handsomer than himself.”

Pepin, previously to his death, had divided the empire between his two sons, Charles and Carloman, and this partition having been sanctioned by a national assembly, Carloman assumed the sovereignty of Austrasia and the German states; and Karl, or Charles, reigned over Neustria, Burgundy, and Aquitaine. Both princes are said to have been crowned on the same day.

[769]; Charles at Noyon, and Carloman at Soissons. The new era was ushered in, like so many previous ones, by a general outbreak of the tributary and disaffected states. In Italy, Didier, the Lombard king, revolted against the authority of the Franks, and was joined by the Duke of Bavaria, his son-in-law; while Aquitaine, so recently and with such difficulty subdued, once more took arms to assert its independence. Hunald, the father of the murdered Waifre, at the first news of the death of Pepin and his son, quitted his monastery in the isle of Rhé, and appeared in mail in the midst of his ancient subjects, who flocked around his standard, and hailed him as a deliverer. The two Frank sovereigns, instead of combining their forces to meet the exigencies which sprung up around them, quarrelled at the commencement, and Carloman refused to march his Austrasians to the aid of his brother. Charles, however, whom there can be no impropriety in at once distinguishing as CHARLEMAGNE, did not shrink from the struggle. He hastily gathered his leudes and vassals and marched without delay against Hunald, who was compelled forthwith to abandon Aquitaine, and seek refuge in the Gascon territory, of which Lupus had been permitted to remain sovereign duke. Here the fugitive found brief respite. Charlemagne followed him, and compelled Lupus to deliver him a prisoner into his hands, when the old man was condemned to perpetual captivity. The unexpected vigour and rapidity of the young king of Neustria, at once appalled Didier and Tassillon, who abandoned their hostile designs and paid up the tribute demanded from them.

From the pursuit of his enemies, Charlemagne turned to chastise his brother Carloman, whom, for refusing to assist him, he regarded as a covert foe. The death of Carloman in 771, is believed to have prevented his dethronement. At all events, of so decided a character was the enmity of Charlemagne, that on his approaching the Austrasian capital the widow of Carloman took her two children and fled for safety to the court of Didier — content to lose the heritage of her sons rather than they should fall into the hands of their uncle, who, there was reason to apprehend, would imprison them for life, if not put them to death. Charlemagne himself, however, is said to have complained bitterly of the flight of the young princes, saying, that “he did not deserve to be feared in that manner;” but it must be added, his love for his nephews did not prompt him for a moment to forego his interest. He took to himself the kingdom of Austrasia, and united its army with his own; thus bringing once more the whole realm of France under one sceptre.

In the year 772, commenced the long and arduous war of the Franks against the Saxons. The territory of this warlike race extended from the German Ocean to Slavonia, embracing the entire northern region of Germany. The population consisted of a number of tribes, each under its independent duke or chief, and all retaining, to a great extent, the primitive habits and customs recorded by Tacitus to have prevailed among their ancestors. They

still disdained to live in cities or towns, or to depend upon agriculture or the peaceful arts of subsistence, but led a wandering and predatory life, and worshipped their strange gods in the wild forests and prairies with which their immense country was overspread. They have been described as comprising three distinct races—the Westphalians, inhabiting the northern frontier: the Eastphalians or Easterlings, bordering on Bohemia; and the Angrians, dwelling in what constitutes the kingdom of Prussia. In personal strength and prowess these tribes alone were able to stand man to man in fight against the tall and muscular Franks, by whom, notwithstanding, in consequence of the want of union among themselves, they had often been subdued, and to whom they had long been tributary, though always ready to revolt on a favourable opportunity. The Merovingian rule over them had been comparatively light; but under Charles Martel the attempt had been made to force upon them other laws and manners, and a new religion, and this had called forth all the ire and energy of an outraged people. All that they valued—independence, traditions of ancient renown, the creed of their forefathers, the customs under which they had lived and died from ge-



neration to generation, were threatened by innovators, at the head of whose armies marched missionaries bearing on high a symbol of faith which to

them was but an emblem of spiritual as well as corporeal subjection ; and the rear of the invading bands was filled with legislators and governors who regarded their charge merely as a barbarian prey. Churches and monasteries had already been reared in the most fertile spots on their soil, and around them were beginning to be grouped those clusters of cottages and habitations from which arose the villages and towns of the middle ages. It was Christianity and civilization, doubtless, against which the Germans arrayed themselves ; but the fair way of stating the case is to say that their resistance was that of a brave and free people to foreign and arbitrary domination. This resistance took its most formidable character under Charlemagne. It was deemed by all parties a final struggle, and the assailed were animated by despair.

The first efforts of the insurgent Saxons were directed against the castles and fortresses which had been constructed during the last wars by Charles Martel and Pepin. To these places of security they conveyed their wives and children, with the old, the maimed, and the sick, and all their deities and wealth. When Charlemagne appeared, however, they found themselves unable to defend what they had easily won, and stronghold after stronghold fell into the hands of the Franks. In one they made a determined stand—the castle of Eresburg, near Paderborn, in which they had deposited the sacred image of their god Hermansaül. This idol, placed on a rude column, was armed at all points. In its right hand it held a standard on which a rose was depicted, and in its left was the balance of justice. On the breast was carved a bear, and the shield bore the representation of a lion. Antiquaries, who have indulged many speculations concerning this deity, have discovered him to be identical with Mars, Mercury, and Juno, and also with Arminius, the conqueror of Varus. But be this as it may, he is known to have been worshipped with great devotion by the Saxons, who regarded him as their tutelary divinity, and filled his temple with gold and silver ornaments and offerings. Charlemagne felt the importance of destroying this relic. He laid siege to Eresburg, carried it by storm, pillaged the temple, and burned the image of Hermansaül, and set his army to destroy the entire fortress—a task which occupied his immense host for three days. This done, and the Saxons being scattered once more, he returned towards France, “leaving to the vanquished a remembrance which demanded vengeance.” They awaited, nevertheless, till their foe should be entangled in new transactions—a brief period. Indeed a lengthened peace could scarcely have been hoped for. The south champed the bit, and burned with rage at its humiliation ; and Italy was rife with the elements of combustion. In the latter country, the pope and the king of the Lombards were constantly provoking but dared not come to strife. The ambition of the pontiff made him aspire to the government of the Lombard territory ; but except he was supported by the Franks, he was powerless to act. Didier, on the other hand, was filled with mortification to behold the rich provinces of the Greek

Exarchate in the hands of a doting churchman, whose pride and arrogance increased in proportion as he became more dependant. Terror and assumption alternately swayed the conduct of each. The Lombards now encroached upon their old enemy's dominion, and now retired at the mandate of the Frank ; while the pope fulminated excommunications, and implored peace, according to the disposition at the moment of his patron and defender. It was reserved for Charlemagne to terminate the harassing crisis.

A short time after the death of his father, Charlemagne had wedded a daughter of Didier, notwithstanding the earnest protestations of the pope, who was scandalized at such an alliance with a heretic, though it should be borne in mind he himself had not scrupled to advocate the cause of the Arian when to do so consorted with his own interest. For several years nothing had occurred to interrupt the harmony existing between the king and his spouse ; but eventually the former was smitten with the charms of the beautiful Hildegarde, and in order to espouse her he repudiated the daughter of Didier ; who, to avenge the wrong, solicited Adrian I., who had now succeeded Paul in the pontificate, to consecrate the two sons of Carloman, who remained with their mother in the Lombard court, as kings of France. Adrian, however, was a wary and sagacious man, and how small soever might have been the love he bore to the ambitious Frank monarch, he inherited all the hate of his predecessors against the Lombards. He refused to do the bidding of Didier, and the latter immediately commenced hostilities against the Roman state, and marched at the head of a large army to renew at the gates of the Holy City the scenes which had been enacted by Luitprand and his successor. Adrian, in alarm, despatched messengers to solicit the aid of Charlemagne, and in the meantime barricaded the doors of St. Peter's with large bars of iron, manned the walls of the Holy City, and prepared to hold out to the last extremity.

Charlemagne, like his father, Pepin, had a double motive for protecting the pope. It afforded him a pretext for interfering in the affairs of the Lombards, and rendered the pontiff entirely subservient to his views and wishes. He no sooner heard therefore of the aggression of Didier, than he appointed a general rendezvous at Geneva ; hastened to the foot of the Alps, divided his army into two bands, and crossed the mountains—himself penetrating into Italy by way of Mount Cenis, and his natural brother Bernard by the route of the great St. Bernard. The particulars of this passage have not been recorded, but we may judge of its difficulties and the skill requisite to surmount them from the details of a modern expedition of the same kind. Didier awaited the Franks at the mouth of the defiles opening upon the plains of Lombardy, and might probably have opposed an insuperable barrier to their progress, had his followers been animated by a spirit of patriotism or loyalty. But Didier had never been the chosen king of his people ; and at the moment when the troops of Charlemagne are said to have paused, and spoken of retiring, the Lombards themselves, influenced by

disaffection or terror, deserted their post and fled, scarcely taking time to bear with them their tents and baggage. Didier, closely followed by Charlemagne, retreated to Pavia, where he shut himself up, and was immediately besieged by the Franks, who were detained before the walls for six months. The Frank monarch, meanwhile, following the example of Theodoric, when at the same place he destroyed the dominion of the Heruli, left his generals to urge the operations of the siege, and occupied himself in reducing the surrounding country, which fell without difficulty into his hands. When he returned to Pavia there remained of the whole realm of Didier nothing but what was encircled by the walls of the city.

In the sixth month of the siege, hunger and disease added their ravages to those of war, and murmurs became loud among the inhabitants, who wished to throw themselves on the clemency of the conqueror. Didier, however, would not listen to such wishes while a hope remained; and capitulation was deferred from day to day, though all serious efforts of resistance had ceased. It was the cleaving of despair to its last hold: the struggle of the perishing mariner on a frail plank in the midst of the ocean. The Franks knew that it was so, and relaxed their efforts—leaving time and famine to yield up their prey. At the festival of Easter Charlemagne himself paid a visit to Rome, where he was received with all the honours which had formerly been paid to the Imperial French and the Patricians. No sooner was Adrian informed of the approach of the king than he despatched the nobles and magistrates of Rome to meet him with the consecrated banners of the Holy City, about thirty miles from the gates. At the distance of a mile the Flaminian way was lined with the schools or national communities; the Roman youth were under arms, and children of a more tender age, with palms and olive branches in their hands, chanted "*Hosanna in excelsis*." At sight of the crosses and holy ensigns of the saints, Charlemagne dismounted from his horse, led the procession of nobles to the Vatican, and as he ascended the stairs devoutly kissed each step at the threshold of the apostles. The pope, at the head of his clergy, received his deliverer on the steps of St. Peter's. They embraced as friends and equals, and in their march to the altar the king held in his left hand the right hand of the pope, while the assembled multitude chanted this verse of the gospel:—"Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Charlemagne remained for a week at Rome, during which he confirmed, at least verbally, and even added to, the ample donations of his father to the apostolic see: and having received the blessing of Adrian, he returned to Pavia, which was now no longer able to maintain a shew of defence. The people constrained their prince to yield in despite of his own reluctance and that of one of his generals, who expressed his determination to defend the city to its last rampart. This was Hunald, the ancient duke of Aquitaine, who, having escaped from his Frank prison, had found a refuge among the Lombards—who likewise accorded him a grave. The women of Pavia,

exasperated at the obstinacy of the old man, rose in revolt against him, dragged him forth into the streets and stoned him to death; when Didier, fearing the same fate, consented to open the gates of the city, and was consigned by the victor to some monastery in France—some say at Liège, and others at Corbie—whither also were sent the children of Carloman—the last scions of the Merovingian race [774]. Charlemagne thenceforward, at the head of his public acts and ordinances, added the title of king of the Lombards to that of the king of the Franks, and Italy was reduced to the condition of a province of France.

From Lombardy the Franks were hastily recalled by a new revolt of the Saxons, who had been tempted to this step by their belief that his Italian expedition would have occupied Charlemagne for a longer space than it did. The foes to be encountered in this war were of different temper to those on the banks of the Po; and the profits of the enterprise could in no degree compensate for the labour it demanded. But Charlemagne did not shrink from what he believed to be necessary. Besides entertaining a natural desire to preserve and extend his dominion, he has generally obtained credit for being prompted by an earnest wish to promote civilisation among his people. "This," says M. Guizot, "was the prevailing idea of his mind. His were not mere arbitrary expeditions originating in an insatiable thirst for conquest. It is not asserted that all he did may be systematically accounted for, or that his plans display profound diplomatic or strategetic skill; but he obeyed the impulse of a strong necessity resulting from his scheme to repress barbarism. During the whole period of his reign he was employed in arresting the double invasion of the Moslems on the south, and of the Germans and Slavi on the north; both of which were undertaken for the advancement of his great object." Humanity must shudder at the atrocities committed during the wars undertaken for the establishment of this civilisation; but philosophy derives consolation from the fact that barbarism really gave way before the sword of conquest. Like the new civilisations of more recent and enlightened times, however, it was in a great measure the sweeping reform of extermination.

After one of the sanguinary conflicts which marked the campaign of 774, a band of Saxons, mingling with the Frank foragers, obtained admission with them unobserved into the hostile camp, where, having remained till night, they arose, and, sword in hand, hurried from tent to tent, slaughtering all they could encounter. They had thus traversed the camp with little loss to themselves, though covered with the blood of their enemies, and were withdrawing, when Charlemagne, being informed of their ravages, burst upon them with his cavalry, and cut the greater part of them in pieces. The survivors, unable to continue the contest, offered to lay down their arms and surrender; and Charlemagne, notwithstanding the resolution taken in the *Champ de Mai*, where the war had been decided upon, to allow no quarter nor truce, accepted hostages for their future fidelity, and permitted them to depart to their homes. This unlooked-for leniency was occasioned by news

from Italy, where the instant presence of the king had become necessary to quell a revolt among his Cisalpine subjects.

Adalgise, the son of Didier, who had fled on the defeat of his father to Constantinople, had prevailed on the Lombard dukes to espouse his quarrel; which indeed was identical with the cause of national independence. Rodguard, Duke of Frioul, was placed by these chiefs at the head of a league consisting of the dukes of Spoleto, Clusium, and Beneventum, supported by the population of their respective governments, who could ill brook to be considered vassals of the hated Franks. It was the pope who gave Charlemagne timely notice of this formidable conspiracy. By means of the priests and confessors, who bowed in all things to his supreme authority, the pontiff had already established a general system of espionage, and acquired power to serve his friends and obstruct his enemies throughout the Christian world. The Frank king lost no time ere profiting by his intelligence. He hastened at the head of a strong force into Italy [775]; fell suddenly upon the territory of the duke of Frioul, and defeated, captured, and beheaded that prince. The Duke of Spoleto and his colleagues thereupon laid down their arms, and were permitted on easy terms to retain their rank and estates; while Charlemagne hastened back towards the Saxon territory to repress new incursions of that unconquerable people.

On this occasion the insurgents were surprised on the banks of the Lippe, and in token of their perfect submission consented to receive Christian baptism. Charlemagne, however, knew the value of these forced submissions too well to trust entirely to their efficacy. He resolved to try a more solemn and impressive obligation. He summoned a general assembly of the Saxon people to Paderborn—a central point in their territory—and there, in the presence of his army, and of their followers, extorted from the chiefs an oath—sworn between the hands of Charlemagne—of fealty and devotion to the king as their suzerain. This was the veritable homage of the middle ages. The mark of subjection of man to his fellow man—in contradistinction to a general submission to the law—which was scarcely extinguished in France at the commencement of the present century. A single leader, it is said, escaped this humiliation—the renowned Witikind, who, with more pride or less faith than his comrades, fled to Denmark, instead of presenting himself as required at Paderborn. In his retreat he collected around him many of his discontented countrymen, and speedily became the head and centre of a band of patriots who sought to restore the independence of their nation. From the leader of an obscure tribe of pagan barbarians, he became an important historical character, the last champion of the rights and freedom of ancient Germany, and in some sort a rival of Charlemagne himself.

It was at Paderborn [777] where Charlemagne gave audience to several Saracen emirs, who came from Spain to solicit his protection. According to the chronicle of Moissac, the cruelty of the caliph Abderame was the cause of their appeal to the infidel foreigner. He had caused one of their brothers



Saracen Emissaries imploring aid from Charlemagne.



to be burned, after striking off his hands and feet. He had also tyrannised over Moslem, Jew, and Christian, without distinction or remorse, and large companies of persons of the two latter creeds were emigrating from all parts of Spain "which was become a place of desolation." Part of the inhabitants, before taking flight, it is said, had set their houses on fire and consumed therein their children and slaves. These representations did not fall upon inattentive ears. Charlemagne had long desired to extend his frontier beyond the Pyrenees, and this afforded him a pretext for the attempt. He had no sooner therefore pacified and dismissed the Saxons, than he turned towards the south. He celebrated the festival of Easter, 778, in Aquitaine; where, at his house of Cassineuil, he had convoked the *Champ de Mai*. War was speedily resolved on, and the Frank army, divided into two overwhelming corps, advanced against Spain—the one by way of Roussillon, and the other by Navarre—with directions to re-unite under the walls of Zaragossa. All the nations which were allied with or paid tribute to the Franks—Neustrians, Austrasians, Burgundians, Lombards, Bavarians, Saxons, and Aquitanians,—were represented by their troops and chiefs in the camp at Zaragossa. The city, strong as were its Moorish fortifications, was unable to resist the formidable attack of the host by which it was beleaguered, and, immediately upon its fall, Huesca, Jacca, Barcelona, and Girona, sent of their own accord offers of submission, and entreaties for peace, to the invader. All the country from the Ebro to the Pyrenees was soon reduced; and being formed into the *Spanish March*, was placed under the jurisdiction of a Frank governor, who established his seat at Barcelona, and exercised authority over Roussillon, Catalonia, Aragon, and Navarre. Charlemagne did not pursue his career of victory. His Austrasian and German followers were unable to endure the heat of a Spanish summer; and he was therefore compelled to return to a more congenial climate.

Not a hostile army had shewn itself during the advance of the Franks, or while they remained in the open country of Spain; but on their return, the Gascons of the mountains, who had long before exhibited their preference for the rule of the Saracens to that of their Christian neighbours, formed an ambush to cut off the retreat of Charlemagne, whose troops were defiling along the Navarrese road through the *Por*, or pass of Roncesvaux. The multitude, however, was too great to be attacked *en masse*; the enemy therefore paused till the host had disappeared, and the rear-guard and baggage-wains alone remained in the valley, when, from a wood which crowned the heights on either side of the gorge, the active mountaineers, conducted by Lupus, their duke, descended like an avalanche, and swept all who attempted resistance before them. The most celebrated warriors of Charlemagne—his twelve peers or Paladins—with the flower of his gallant army, perished in that fatal struggle. Their names are enshrined in poetry and romance, and have become known as models of chivalry throughout the world. Who has not heard of Olivier, Guy of Burgundy, Rioul du Mas, and the invincible

Roland—the Orlando of Ariosto and Bojardo? Contemporary annalists have left us no details of the conflict; but the popular ballads and traditions which have survived furnish conclusive evidence as to the heroical character assigned to it in France, in Spain, and throughout Europe. The writer of the “Chronicles of St. Denis” has given a circumstantial account of the death of Roland; but evidently from the corrupted traditions of his time, since he transforms the Gascons and their chief into Saracens, and represents the Christian army as betrayed by one of its own number to the infidels. In the absence of any more authentic narrative, an abridgment of the chronicler’s account of this celebrated passage in the history of chivalry is subjoined.

“When the battle was done,” says he, “and the Saracens had retreated to the distance of eleven miles, Roland went alone into the midst of the field to ascertain what had become of them; when, separated from his comrades, he found a black Saracen, reposing in a wood. He took the infidel and tied him to the trunk of a tree, and then ascended a high mountain to see what direction the enemy had taken. Though afar off, he discerned that they were a very great multitude; nevertheless he descended into the valley and pursued them by the same way that Karl and his followers had gone, when they passed through the gorge; but first he sounded his bugle horn, which he usually wore at his right hand, in order to summon to him such of the Christians as might still remain. At the sound of the horn, about a hundred Christians who had lingered in the wood gathered round him. He then unsheathed Durendal, his sword, and going to the Saracen who was still tied to the tree, he threatened to strike off his head unless he accompanied him and pointed out to him king Marsilio; but Roland promised him that, this done, he would suffer him to depart alive. The Saracen went with him and pointed out Marsilio among his Saracen companions, on a red horse and with a round shield; whereupon Roland allowed him to go free as he had promised.

“Then Roland and they who were with him, pricking forward, rushed courageously among the Saracens and assaulted them, sustained by the strength of the Lord. Roland selected as his own antagonist a Saracen of larger stature than the rest, and struck him in such wise with Durendal his sword, that he clove him from the skull to the spurs, so that one moiety of him and of his horse fell to the right and the other to the left, which marvellous blow when the Saracens saw, they took to flight, leaving Marsilio on the field with but a small company. Roland and his followers, still encouraged by our Lord, maintained the battle with the strength and fierceness of lions, laying about them to the right and to the left, till they approached the spot where was Marsilio. The king, seeing them, fled; but Roland pursued him closely, and overtaking him, by the aid of our Lord, slew him with other Saracens. In this last conflict all the hundred companions of Roland were slain, and he himself was attacked by four lances, and sorely smitten with poles and stones, but he still escaped; while Baligans, who had

witnessed the death of his brother Marsilio, fled into the country which lay between him and his Saracens.

"There were still in the neighbouring wood, Baudouin and Thierry, and some other Christians, who had taken refuge there for fear of the Saracens; but Karlemaine, and his people, who had passed the defile, were ignorant of the slaughter which had taken place in Roncesvaux.

"Roland then repaired alone into the midst of the field of battle, weary and faint through the heavy blows which he had dealt and received, and afflicted with grief and anguish for the death of the noble barons whom he had seen overthrown and slain that day; and sorrowing thus he traversed the wood, even to the foot of the mountain Cisaire, where descending from his horse beneath a tree, he threw himself on a large block of marble near the top of the valley of Roncesvaux, still holding in his hand Durendal his sword."

The narrator goes on to relate how Roland, being oppressed with grief, and fearing lest his bright, sharp, strong, and well-proved sword should fall into the hands of the Saracens, strove to break it against the stone on which he rested; but that, though the marble was cleft by his strokes, the sword remained sound and uninjured. Then Roland put his horn to his mouth and blew a long blast, hoping that if any Christians still remained in the wood, they would hasten to him, or that if all had passed through the valley some would hear his call and return. So strong and loud was the blast he blew, that the veins and nerves of his neck were burst by the force which he exerted.

"The voice of the bugle" reached the ears of the king, who had halted in a valley, long afterwards known as the valley of Charlemagne, at about eight miles distance from the spot where Roland remained; and the king desired to return to the succour of his gallant follower: but the traitor Guenelons—"who may be well compared to Judas,"—sought the death of Roland, and dissuaded Charlemagne from sending aid to Roncesvaux, saying, that it was the custom of Roland to wind his horn at the sight of any beast of chase in the woods, and that doubtless he had merely lingered behind to indulge his favourite sport.

Meanwhile Roland, his neck and throat swollen to suffocation, had fallen on the green grass, being consumed with burning thirst. He made a sign to his brother Baudouin to bring him drink, but there was none to be found; and Baudouin returning, saw that his brother was near to death. He gave him his blessing, therefore, and took his horn and his sword, and mounted his horse, and fled to the host of Charlemagne; for he feared that by longer delay he should himself fall into the hands of the Saracens and be slain. When he had thus departed, Thierry came to the place where the dying Roland lay. To him the hero made his last confession, and from him received the last consolations of a Christian; then the "blessed soul of Roland parted from his body, and was borne by angels to its place of rest,

where it remains in everlasting joy, through its incomparable merits, in the company of the glorious martyrs."

Thus ended the Spanish expedition of Charlemagne; and with it all his attempts against the Saracens who had established themselves beyond the Pyrenees. Scarcely, however, had the war closed, when a double revolt burst forth at the same moment in Saxony and Italy. Witikind, with his band of Saxons and Danes, had hoisted in the former country the standard of independence; and the Lombards had obtained the assistance of the Greeks to throw off the domination of their new king. Charlemagne hastened first to Italy, where he soon defeated and punished the rebels; then marching to the banks of the Elbe and the Weser, he carried vengeance and desolation into the country of the Saxons. This last was a war of extermination. In one day [782] four thousand five hundred Germans were barbarously massacred. Witikind, however, amply avenged the outrage. In an ambush he captured twenty-four thousand Franks and sacrificed every man. And thus the war continued year after year. Murder, retaliation, pillage, violation, a ruined country, and a starving population were the bases upon which the renown of Charlemagne, as a conqueror in Germany was founded. Three armies at the same time were sent into the districts so often ravaged, to complete the work of destruction, and a hundred leagues of territory were reduced to the condition of a desert. But Charlemagne felt no compunction. His objects, besides increasing his power as a monarch, were to extend the blessings of civilisation and the light of Christianity! In one of his capitularies he declared all the Saxons Christians, and, upon this fiction imposed the penalty of death on all who should relapse to the worship of their false gods, on all who should reject the rite of baptism, and on all who should eat forbidden meats on the fast days appointed by the church.

In those rude times mad fanaticism rendered valour more formidable to the peace of mankind than ambition, or all the furies which interest or malevolence could let loose in a more enlightened age. The excited warrior persuaded himself that, by the annihilation of his fellow-men, he was obeying the sacred behest of their Divine Creator. The unsophisticated Christian, who worships a God whose goodness and whose bounty seem almost as extensive as his power, and who professes faith in a Saviour who devoted himself not only to death, but to a life of humiliation and sorrow, to redeem those who had sinned, would naturally think, that to imitate so far as might be that indulgence and that compassion, would be the most acceptable offering to the Almighty, and his son Jesus Christ. But this has, unhappily, in numerous instances, been forgotten or denied. Man invested with power, as the minister of heaven, has been inaccessible to the supplicant. He could only recognise the sublime in the terrible, and to pour out the vial of his wrath in honour of a gracious forgiving father, has been his pleasure and his pride. In his eyes, mercy to those who could no longer resist would be a sin against the majesty of Heaven. The vengeful sword was destined to

wave with appalling lustre over all who differed in matters of faith from the ruthless conqueror; the voice of charity was not allowed for a moment to be heard, and humanity pleaded in vain.

Unhappily, the means possessed by Charlemagne were equal to the dismal task, which, animated with fanatical zeal, he imposed upon himself. The overwhelming numbers he was enabled to bring into the field, and his sanguinary ordinances, were eventually successful. The Saxons were thinned and subjugated, and even the brave Witikind relinquished his hopeless struggle for freedom, accepted the mercy of his conqueror, and degenerating into one of the *fidèles* of Charlemagne, could no longer be distinguished as a Saxon. The country was then honoured with the erection of eight bishoprics; those of Munster, Osnaburgh, Paderborn, Minden, Bremen, Verden, Hildersheim, and Halbertstadt. But the unhappy people were not even permitted again to till their native fields. Twenty thousand families were at one time driven from their settlements, and apportioned as slaves among the Franks. The nation which had so long disputed for mastery in the west, was thus stricken down at a blow; and, though in after times it reappeared upon the stage and took an active part in the conflicts, physical and mental, which agitated the middle ages, it was never able to regain its ascendancy, but dwindled into comparative insignificance.

After vanquishing the Saxons, the Allemanni, and the Bavarians, Charlemagne turned his arms against the Huns, or Avars; who, from the time of Attila, had always preserved their Tartar manners and hideous physiognomy. They had still remained unconquered, and led the predatory life which distinguished them when they threatened Rome with destruction. No detailed account of the war against them has been transmitted to us; but it must have been full of difficulty, for it occupied not less than eight years, and required the efforts of three magnificent armies directed against them from as many points before they could be subdued. The contest is chiefly celebrated for the capture by the Franks of the famous ring of the Avars, where was the palace of their chief; and in which were preserved the spoils taken by their warriors during two hundred and fifty years of incessant rapine. The Hunnish nobles at the close of the war were put to death, and the people forcibly converted to Christianity or driven into the impracticable woods and morasses with which their country then, as now, abounded. That the race was not extirpated is certain from its re-appearance in considerable numbers and with great power at a later era.

On his return from the expedition against the Huns, Charlemagne was met at Paderborn by Leo III., who, succeeding Adrian in the pontificate, had been compelled to flee from the attempts of Roman assassins. The pope was honourably received by the patron of the Holy City, and sent back to be re-established in the apostle's seat by a guard of counts and soldiers: having, it has been surmised, undertaken to perform an important service for his benefactor, in return. But be this as it may, the Frank king in the

ensuing year returned the visit of the pontiff, and was hailed by the population as king and patrician—the monarch and protector of Rome. Here, on Christmas-day, in the year 800, Charlemagne, till then known to his contemporaries simply as Charles or Karl, appeared in the church of St. Peter, dressed as a Roman patrician, and while engaged in prayer on the steps of the high altar, Leo suddenly placed on his head a crown of gold, pronouncing the ancient formula used at the coronation of a Christian Emperor—"Glory and long life to Charles Augustus, crowned by God as



the great and pacific emperor of the Romans." The clergy and the assembled people repeated the words with one voice, and the dome instantly resounded with loud acclamations. The emperor was then consecrated by his holiness, and the pope and nobles present did him homage. Charlemagne, on his part, swore to maintain the faith and the privileges of the church, and made rich offerings to the shrine of the apostle. The emperor afterwards pretended ignorance of the intentions of Leo; but this cannot easily be credited. The journey to Rome, the necessary preparations for the ceremony, and the known wish of Charlemagne to acquire the imperial title, "reveal," says Gibbon, "his knowledge and expectation."

The warlike portion of the reign of Charlemagne seems to have terminated



Imperial Costume of Charlemagne.

with his accession to the throne of the west; and the period of peace which succeeded was devoted to the consolidation of his dominions by legislation, the promotion of literature, science and art, and the establishment of religious uniformity among his subjects. His sway extended over the entire realm of France, with the exception, perhaps, of Britany and the Basque Provinces, which still maintained a species of wild freedom; over Germany and the far north, to the Baltic, including the dominions of Prussia, Poland, Bohemia, Bavaria, and Switzerland, and at least a nominal suzerainty over the country of the Huns, to the Danube; over the greater part of Italy—a tract extending a thousand miles from the Alps to the borders of Calabria; and over that part of Spain which runs from the Pyrenees to the Ebro. Thus from west to east the empire stretched from the Atlantic to the Vistula, and from north to south from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. The government of these immense regions required no ordinary political skill and knowledge of human nature; and it is the talent and judgment which he displayed in his civil administration that entitles Charlemagne to the rank which he holds as a great historical character, more than all his victories, or the magnitude of his domain. Not that in the present day all he did could be approved or tolerated; but, what was equally good or better, his measures were adapted to the age in which he lived, and had the effect, rude and savage as we may now deem them, of at once planting the seeds of general civilisation, and imparting an impulse to their growth. “His real merit,” says Gibbon, “is doubtless enhanced by the barbarism of the nation and the times from which he emerged.” And if we may not regard him as a philosopher, intellectually in advance of his generation, he appears to have been at least a sound-thinking and practical statesman, capable of tracing passing events to their causes, and of drawing thence useful hints for the conduct of the future—not in solitary instances, but throughout his long and arduous career. His means of achievement were incessant activity both of mind and body; and his great aim seems to have been the establishment of a power which might become the rich and peaceful heritage of his posterity. He sought, in fact, to found a dynasty, and to clear from the path of his children the numerous obstacles which had impeded his grandfather, his father, and himself.

“Though the empire of Charlemagne,” says M. Guizot, “can scarcely be called a *state*, which implies something of too regular a stamp, and raises ideas too little in accordance with the society over which he presided, it is certain that he, the master of an immense territory, was indignant at beholding all things therein in a most dissevered, anarchial, and brutish condition, and devoted his energies to lessen their hideousness. His first measure was to despatch his *missi dominici* into the different provinces of his empire to enquire into facts, and either reform what was amiss, or make reports thereon to him. He held general assemblies much more regularly than his predecessors, and compelled the attendance of almost all the influential men in his territories. These were not free assemblies, nor convoked for what we

should call deliberation ; but were used as a means of acquiring information as to facts, and of introducing regularity and union among his disorganized subjects."

These assemblies, the reception and entertainment of ambassadors, the composition of his capitularies, and the reformation of some and the formation of other national institutions throughout his realm, worthily occupied all the latter years of his life.

A short time after his coronation, an embassy was sent to him at his favourite palace of Aix-la-Chapelle, from Irene, empress of the east, who after causing the eyes of her son to be put out, had usurped his sceptre, and governed, with ability and even splendour, the Grecian empire. It is asserted that Irene sought, by espousing Charlemagne, to unite once more the eastern and western world, and to restore the magnificent throne of Constantine the Great ; but her object, whatever it might have been, was frustrated by her overthrow and exile, before her envoys had concluded their negotiation ; and Nicephorus, who assumed the purple upon her dethronement, succeeded in reviving the old hatred of the Greeks against the barbarous Franks and their monarch. Yet Nicephorus feared though he hated Charlemagne ; and in order to conciliate him, he sent ambassadors to the western court. A curious picture of the pomp and pageantry with which the great Charles surrounded himself on state occasions, has been preserved by M. Gaillard, in reference to the audience granted to the emissaries of Nicephorus. They were conducted through four halls. In the first they were ready to prostrate themselves before a splendidly attired personage seated in a chair of state, till informed that he was but one of the imperial vassals—the constable or master of the horse. In the second, third, and fourth apartments, occupied by the count Palatine, the steward and the chamberlain, similar mistakes occurred ; and curiosity and impatience were excited to the utmost when the presence chamber was thrown open, and the emperor himself was revealed upon a gorgeous throne, enriched with all the luxury and wealth of the east, and surrounded by the victorious chiefs whose names were scarcely less celebrated throughout the world than his own. A treaty of peace and alliance was concluded between the Frank and Greek potentates, and the *august* Charlemagne was hailed as *Basileus*, or Emperor of the Romans, and saluted as the brother of the autocrat of Constantinople.

But Byzantium did not bound the fame of Charlemagne. His renown penetrated to the remotest east ; and the caliph Haroun al Raschid, one of the most powerful and vigorous, and at the same time the most learned and liberal of the Arab conquerors, sent to him messengers, with letters and presents, from the banks of the Euphrates. The Frank chroniclers speak with the garrulous admiration of simplicity of the marvellous things thus brought from Bagdad to Aix-la-Chapelle ; among which were an elephant, a wheel-clock, and an organ—the first, it is believed, that had been seen in Europe, and of which the playing is said to have occasioned the death of one of the

emperor's numerous concubines. The keys of the holy sepulchre, and a consecrated standard of Jerusalem, were added by the Saracen, who thus recognised Charlemagne as the chief among Christians, and sought to establish a friendly intercourse between the disciples of Jesus and Mahomet. It has been asserted that Haroun foresaw and wished to avert the wars of the Crusaders, but this is a mere fancy which had its birth in after times.

These foreign courtesies found Charlemagne engaged in more important transactions—the deliberation of the national assemblies, and the correction of abuses among his subjects. It had been customary, from the time of Clovis, for the king, with more or less regularity, to hold in his palace, or the neighbourhood, an annual assembly in the month of March, of such of the clergy and leudes as he chose to summon. These assemblies could scarcely be called legislative; for although projects of law and administrative acts were submitted to their discussion, the decision by which decrees were adopted or rejected, remained with the king alone—who, moreover, from being “Amenable,” according to the ancient canons, “like the whole body of the people to the laws,” had grown in process of time to be irresponsible. The only apparent use of the assemblies under the Merovingian race, was to enable the sovereign to ascertain the feelings of his nobles and people on subjects of moment; and to gather them together for his wars. The last, indeed, was often the sole object of a meeting. The king, when he contemplated hostilities, commanded all his peers and vassals, in his letter of convocation, to hasten to the rendezvous in military array, when the dukes, counts, and marquises, brought from their provinces, counties, and marches, the militia, or standing army, by which their respective governments were sustained; and the *Bénéficiers* of the crown appeared with their armed retainers. In questions of war it appears that the members of the assembly preserved their olden right of decision; and if the design of the king displeased them they dispersed; but if on the contrary it was approved, the field was taken forthwith. In their origin every freeman was entitled to be present and take part in these assemblies, but the inconvenience of attendance had caused the meetings to be neglected, and eventually few met but such as were specially summoned. Charlemagne sought to remedy this, and, if not to bring back a general muster at the assemblies, to obtain at least a representation of the people, and thus impart greater weight to the popular deliberations, and obtain sounder information to act upon. For this purpose he directed the counts to bring with them to the meetings, the *scabins*, or local judges of their governments, who being compelled to render an account of the performance of their functions, were restrained much more than formerly within legal bounds in their judicial administration, while the condition and wants of those subject to their jurisdiction obtained a chance of being better known. These judges, it appears, took no part in the general discussions, but merely acted as witnesses, or jurors, to make presentments as to facts.

"The assembly," says a modern French writer, "was the centre of the Carlovingian world. There judgments were rendered, the administration was directed, foreign ambassadors were received, and peace and war decided on. The sanction of the king was necessary to all the assembly recommended, but that sanction once obtained, the decree was irrevocable. From the national assemblies those numerous capitularies which constituted the laws of the empire, and which may be called the Code of Charlemagne, were issued. As soon as a new ordinance was published, the *missi dominici* were furnished with copies, and sent to see the same executed in their several districts. These *missi* made the circuit of all the provinces, investigated the conduct of the magistrates, and collected the complaints of the people. They were agents for the enlightenment at once of the people and the emperor, and acted as a check upon the conduct of the nobles and men of power, whose authority Charlemagne sought to repress. They were bound to report to the assemblies the operation and observance of the capitularies, and on returning to the sphere of their mission they were required to convoke local assemblies to publish the new ordinances they had received." Thus, the Code of Charlemagne was not a system of laws, but a series of occasional edicts framed according to the information from time to time received, and as new circumstances and necessities presented themselves. They embraced regulations as well for the most trivial as for the most important things—for the economy of the imperial farms, the care of poultry, and the sale of eggs, as well as for the reformation of the public manners, and the punishment of offenders of all grades. The emperor, according to Gibbon, "wished to improve the laws and character of the Franks; and his attempts, however feeble and imperfect, are deserving of praise. The inveterate evils of the times were suspended or mollified by his government; but," adds the same author, "in his institutions I can seldom discover the general views and the immortal spirit of a legislator, who survives himself for the benefit of posterity." No course, however, which could have been beneficially pursued by Charlemagne, at once adapted to his age and the people over whom he ruled, other than that he adopted, has been pointed out by the philosophical critic. Indeed, had the emperor legislated upon any mere abstract idea of right, and with reference to a state of society and civilisation which had no existence, instead of being guided in his measures by the actual condition and wants of those around him, he might perhaps have been remembered as a benevolent Utopian, but it would never have been recorded that his decrees had the effect of ameliorating the crying evils of his times; nor would the title of *Great* have been inseparably blended with his name in history. His laws would have been impracticable, and have increased the prevailing confusion, rather than aided in restoring order or producing union and public prosperity.

Of the capitularies themselves, a great number relate to church discipline and to the rights and privileges of the clergy. It was the policy of

Charlemagne, as it had been of his father and grandfather, to reconcile by every means in his power, the good offices of ecclesiastics, as being the most intellectually advanced among his subjects, and at the same time incapable of rendering their power hereditary. Perhaps, also, another consideration was not without its weight. The emperor had been taught by the resistance of the Saxons, the Aquitanians, and the Gascons, to bestow some attention upon the *people*—a class previously but too much despised. By patronising the clergy, he gave at least a shadow of importance to this class, which supplied to the church the greatest part of its members, and with which the clerical body maintained the most intimate relations: while the nobles, on the contrary, kept up a constant struggle for heritable authority, and seldom failed to seize an opportunity of reducing their less wealthy neighbours to a state of millenage. Hence, the bishops and inferior churchmen were always summoned to the national assemblies, and were particularly charged with superintending the execution of the laws. A capitulary of 803 exempted the clergy from military service and from the charges attending the finding of substitutes. Several prior edicts had forbidden to them the use of arms, and indulgence in the chase. The right of sanctuary, which had become an abuse of the worst kind, was now restrained. The payment of tithes, which had formerly been a voluntary gift to the church, was rendered compulsory, and the appropriation was regulated by law. The reason for the obligatory enactment is curious:—the demons had proclaimed in the air that the cause of the last dearth was a default of legal provision for the clergy. The free election of the bishops was vested in the people and the priesthood; the ecclesiastical was separated from the civil jurisdiction; and subordination, sobriety, and discretion, were enjoined to the priests as indispensable to their holy calling. It has been before shown that these injunctions were by no means supererogatory. The emperor undertook also the impossible task of settling the creed of his subjects. At Frankfort, under his authority, a synod of three hundred bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastics, decided on the retention of their churches of sanctified images, fixed the limits of orthodoxy, and declared the punishment for heresy and sacrilege.

A capitulary of 805 condemned to prison all sorcerers and magicians, who, however, were to be set at liberty on acknowledging and recanting their errors. This must have been a fertile source of vexation, and have tended materially to retard the progress of that social organisation which Charlemagne sought to advance; since, in all ages and nations, the men who have suffered for this kind of crime, have been those who had outstripped their contemporaries in the knowledge of the art, science, and the phenomena of nature. Charlemagne, however, may be easily excused for his belief in supernatural agencies and compacts, when we reflect that down almost to the present day the same superstitions were general, and that legal murders were not unfrequent for impossible crimes.

Several capitularies regulated the mode in which each Frank should contribute to the defence of the empire. All who were capable of, and entitled to bear arms, refusing or neglecting to rally round the standard of his chief count, on the proclamation of the *heriban* or gathering cry, was condemned to forfeit sixty shillings of gold; or, if unable to pay that sum, he was reduced to slavery until redeemed by his friends, or death discharged the obligation. But this law, rigorous as it was, was less severe than the generality of penal laws at the same period. The children of the condemned were not involved in this offence, and at his death they were allowed to inherit his property. The allegiance of the Franks was double. They were required to take one oath of fidelity to the seigneur under whose banner they served in war, and another to the emperor and his successors.



Adulterers, excommunicated persons, and all such as were of *vile* condition—that is to say, serfs and bondmen—were rejected as witnesses in the courts of law, where the absence of the accused was held as an equivalent to an admission of guilt. A false accuser was condemned to the same punishment or penalty which would have been awarded to the accused if found guilty, and false witnesses had each a hand struck off for his crime; with an exception, however, in favour of the wealthy, that compensation might be made in money instead of in person. Maiming, poisoning, murder, and even parricide, were not punishable with death, provided the culprit could pay

the *weregild*, or value of the victim. Conspirators and incorrigible robbers alone were subjected to death without redemption. The oaths of compurgators were still admitted as evidence of innocence, and the accused was allowed to clear himself by ordeal, or by judicial combat.

According to M. Guizot, the material point of difference between the Salic laws and the capitularies of Charlemagne, is, that the former contain no moral and religious texts in the way of advice; but merely prohibitive or imperative texts. "But in the passage from primitive barbarism to civilisation, legislation assumed another character; morals introduced themselves into it, and became, for a certain time, matter of law. The able legislators, the founders or reformers of communities, became aware of the empire exercised over men's minds by the idea of duty. The instinct of genius informed them that without its support, without the free concurrence of the human will, society could not maintain and develop itself in peace; and they applied themselves to introduce this idea by all sorts of ways, and made legislation a kind of preaching—a means of instruction. This was one of the causes of the strict alliance of Charlemagne with the church, the only power then capable of preaching and teaching morality."

Every effort was made to introduce uniformity into the empire, as well with regard to the laws themselves, as their administration. But this was found impossible. The primitive manners and institutions of the diversity of nations over which Charlemagne reigned, could not be assimilated, and ordinances which were found beneficial to one race were totally inapplicable to another. The attempt was not therefore persevered in; but the emperor instead, collected and revised the ancient laws of the Salians, the Ripuairians, the Saxons, the Lombards, and the Visigoths, reducing them to as near a semblance to each other as they would conveniently bear. The fundamental principle of compensation for injuries by money prevailed all, but this species of atonement prevailed throughout Europe. Political philosophy was not sufficiently advanced to recognise the doctrine of prevention as that which ought to govern the treatment of crime.

Some of the capitularies forbade the exportation of corn in time of scarcity, and others fixed the price of provisions, and indeed of all the objects of trade and commerce; but these aggravated instead of alleviating the evils they were intended to prevent, and increased the list of offenders without abating offences. Several edicts related to canonical rights. In 774, on returning from his first journey to Rome, Charlemagne had brought with him the Code of canons then in use in the Holy City; and he caused similar collections to be made for the use of the Frank clergy. Angelramme, bishop of Metz, collated one set, and caused a copy to be presented to Pope Adrian, by whom it was approved; and of another, many of the articles are said to have been composed by Gregory of Tours. Several contemporary bishops also contributed to the collections. That of Theodulfe, bishop of Orleans, still remains, as a monument of his zeal, learning and talent. The corollaries

of the whole Code or series, were the instruction and rules issued from time to time to explain, amend, and enforce the observation of the capitularies.

But it was not alone in the political organisation of the empire that Charlemagne exhibited his capacity to govern. He sought more than all his predecessors to diffuse knowledge and refinement throughout the various regions subject to his sceptre. He was himself a lover of literature and a liberal patron of learned men. Peter of Pisa, who had been a professor in the public school or university of Pavia, was considered the most valuable part of the booty captured on the conquest of Lombardy, and was sent at once into France. Paul Warnefrid, the historian of the Lombards, was also greatly esteemed by the emperor, and induced to settle at his court, where he composed several works designed for the use of the Frank clergy, among which was a collection of homilies, drawn from the writings of the early fathers, a copy of which Charlemagne caused to be sent to every church-priest, that it might be read for the edification of their several congregations; and another was a 'History of the Bishops of Metz.' From his third journey or Pilgrimage to Rome, in 787, the emperor brought home with him several professors of grammar and arithmetic, and some music masters, to teach the Frank choristers the harmonies of the Gregorian chant. Theodulfe and Leidrade, two of the most eminent churchmen and writers of the age, and both foreigners, enjoyed much of his favour and esteem, and were admitted to an intercourse which seems to have differed little, if at all, from that of friends and equals. Paul of Aquilea, without quitting his country, was frequently consulted by Charlemagne; and Clement, an Irish monk, of whom however, little save his name is known, and Alcuin, an Englishman, one of the greatest men in the history of the period, were maintained and assiduously courted by him.

The zeal of Charlemagne for the revival of letters, moreover, was not limited to the protection and encouragement of men of learning. He set an example of study and perseverance to his courtiers in his own person, and made the acquisition of honour in some measure dependent upon the acquirements of candidates. Although, according to his secretary and biographer, Eginhard, he was unable to write when he ascended the throne, he subsequently became a proficient in the art of committing his thoughts to paper, and added thereto considerable knowledge of languages and astronomy; learned the grammar of Peter of Pisa, and mastered the rhetoric, the logic, and the other sciences taught by his friend Alcuin. His great officers, confidants, and courtiers, were not slow to follow the example of the emperor, whose daughters even were initiated into the mysteries of erudition. Thus, in the imperial palace, a sort of academy was formed, comprising the princes and princesses, the chief nobles, and the distinguished literary men of the household. This association was called the Palatine College, after the ancient schools of the same kind which had existed in the time of the Roman emperors, whose style and dignity, as well as their best institu-

tions, were revived by Charlemagne; and from this germ is believed to have arisen the university of Paris. Besides this, he instituted elementary schools for children, and others for pupils of more advanced age and higher attainments, in which skilful teachers were employed to give instruction in all the current learning of the age. Nor was the emperor satisfied with merely founding academies: he often visited them to see that their objects were efficiently carried out; gave personal directions concerning the studies to be pursued; ascertained the progress of the scholars by personal examination; encouraged the diligent, and threatened the idle and dull with his displeasure. It has been remembered that one of his menaces to the children of the nobility, who were unable to furnish satisfactory replies to his questions, was, that the appointments and benefices at his disposal should be conferred on the children of the poor, unless the sons of the seigneurs surpassed them in learning and talent.

In order to extend the sphere of education throughout his dominions, and to give it increased importance in the eyes of those by whom its beneficial influence could have been little understood or appreciated, he not only wrote letters to all the bishops in the empire, desiring them to re-establish the schools and colleges which had formerly existed in the cathedrals and monasteries within their several dioceses, but drew up or dictated the rules by which those seminaries were to be governed, and the order of the exercises they were required to follow. The instruction to be obtained in these schools was, as may be easily conceived, on a reference to the then state of society, somewhat of the humblest; but still it was instruction, and a great step towards further improvement. In the establishments devoted to young children, the psalms were read, and singing, arithmetic, and grammar were taught; while in those where the classes were of riper age, the liberal arts and the Holy scriptures were studied. Charlemagne, in his letters, not unfrequently propounded questions to which he required the respective answers of the bishops, the monks, and the pupils—a custom to which several of the treatises which that age has bequeathed to posterity may be fairly attributed, and which must have been of the utmost utility.

The better to preserve the Scriptures from interpolation, abridgment, or alteration, through the ignorance or inattention of incompetent copyists, or of those charged with their promulgation, he ordained that every bishop, abbot, and count, should employ a notary or secretary for the sole purpose of multiplying copies of the Gospels, the Psalter, and the Missal, which before being used, were subjected to the careful examination of men of approved learning and integrity. By these persons the defective orthography of the times and other more important errors, were in a great measure rectified. To these critical and editorial labours Alcuin, who seems to have been the literary director of the empire, attached the utmost importance, and laboured diligently with his own hands to effect the reformation which he desired. He made a perfect copy of the Old and New Testaments, into

which a great number of corrections were introduced, and which, being regarded as a standard, was that from which all other transcripts were made. This is believed to be the manuscript still preserved in the library of the Fathers of the Oratory of St. Philip of Neri at Rome, which, in some verses written upon it, is stated to have been presented by the pious ecclesiastic to Charlemagne. At the same time, in order to render the manuscripts neat and legible, the Merovingian, or old Frank character, was abandoned for the small roman letters, of which a beautiful specimen exists in the Medicean copy of Virgil preserved in the Florentine library. Several manuscripts, written in that character by Hardouin and Ovon, monks of Fontenelle, are still extant; while in others of the same period, and on some medals of Charlemagne, the large Roman characters were employed.

The emperor paid special attention to music, especially sacred and choral music. It has been already said, that he brought from Rome several masters of the science, but the jealousy of those masters, who feared that their arts would become naturalized among the Franks, prevented their fulfilling the intentions of Charlemagne in instructing their pupils to the utmost of their knowledge and ability. Two students were therefore sent to Rome to learn the full mysteries of the celebrated 'Gregorian chant;' and when they returned with the secret, one was retained in the imperial chapel, and the other sent to Drogon, a natural son of the emperor, who had been appointed to the bishopric of Metz. In a short time the choir of the last named city became the most famous throughout France; and, as it had been ordained that all the choir-masters in the empire should copy the anthems from those which had been brought from Rome, the 'Gregorian chant' or 'Chant of Metz' was rendered universal.

The study of vocal music thus grew into importance, was incorporated among the seven liberal sciences, and assumed somewhat of a national character, which, to the credit of the French people, it has never entirely lost. It is said in honour of Leidrade, archbishop of Lyons, that he had in his diocese a number of singers sufficiently skilful to be instructors in the art; and it is remembered among his merits that Gervolde, who presided over the monastery of Fontenelle, led his own choir, and sustained it with due harmony and precision.

In speaking of the learning of the age, however, we must not be led away by the name of science to conceive that the knowledge of its truths was very sound or extensive. No trace has been left to us of accurate geographical information, beyond the routine of every-day knowledge, if we may except an assertion of Virgilius, bishop of Salzburg, who, however, appears to have conjectured rather than discovered the existence of antipodes. Medicine always subsisted in some stage of practice, more or less advanced, and was never without a certain degree of respect; but the physicians of the eighth century appear to have been mere mechanics in their profession, and trusted more to charm, spells, and superstitious observances and influences, than to

any knowledge derived from scientific investigation or study. Alcuin had composed a 'Treatise on Geometry,' and Charlemagne, in his letters, has spoken of a Greek treatise on the same subject, which had been communicated to the Franks; but there is now no means of estimating the extent of information which had been obtained in this branch of knowledge, and it is most probable that it was extremely limited and full of errors. So also with Astronomy; the science was cultivated with the utmost care, and its importance was generally acknowledged. Charlemagne devoted much of his time to the study, and Alcuin publicly taught its mysteries, both in the Palatine College and in his monastery of Tours: but it was rather a matter of speculation than of demonstrable certainty. This is placed beyond question by the fact that the emperor sent to an Irish recluse, named Dungal, who resided near St. Denis, to consult him concerning two eclipses of the sun which happened in the year 810, at which time, it should be added, Alcuin was dead.

In estimating the labours of Charlemagne, the influence which he exerted upon his age, and his individual character, it must never be forgotten that his life commenced among barbarians of the rudest stamp, that the sole education of his youth was that of a warrior, and that the best years of his manhood were spent among the wild tribes of the north, whose fierce and licentious manners and propensities must have tended to impress on him a belief that his own country, in comparison with others, was already highly civilised. A lofty genius, an extensive capacity, and a strong faith in the powers and destinies of man, were required to enable him to overlook this view, and he must have possessed untiring energy and patience, to sit down, after contemplating the obstacles that he had to surmount, to evolve light from thick darkness, and order from chaotic confusion. If Peter the Great merits the admiration and gratitude of mankind for his efforts in behalf of the barbarous Russians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Charlemagne assuredly deserves still greater reverence from his species for his exertions, which benefitted the whole European world; and at a period when there were no such inducements to action as those which must have operated on the mind of Peter. The latter could not fail to be struck with the palpable disadvantages, if not the anomaly of a nation of savages remaining without progression, in contact, though on account of its barbarism, nearly excluded from intercourse with states the most highly cultered, the wealthiest, the happiest, and the most powerful in the records of Times; but for the Frank no such means of comparison existed. He might indeed have heard traditions of an era of greatness and glory; but these would scarcely have had reference to the refinement of manners, or the advancement of the peaceful arts of life; but to war and conquest, to multitudes of slaves and the accumulation of spoil. The fame of Peter may fairly be said to be based on his beneficial use of extraordinary talents, while that of Charlemagne sprung from the possession and exercise of high creative faculties, and a power of computing results and adapting his means to the ends which he sought.

In the course which these two sovereigns pursued to give popularity to their efforts, there is more resemblance between Peter and Charlemagne than in their general characters. In order to teach his subjects to build better houses, to become artificers in iron, and to construct ships, the former learned the art of the mason, the blacksmith, and the shipwright; while the latter to give the Franks a zest for Greek, Latin, Astronomy, Logic, and writing, studied what he recommended, and became in his own person an example of the advantages they conferred. Among other things he wrote a great number of letters to the pope, to the bishops of the empire, to his friend Alcuin, to the various members of his family, and to the princes and rulers of other nations. His epistles to the emperors of Constantinople alone were sufficiently numerous to form a considerable collection, and copies of them as such were to be seen a few years after his death in the library of the monastery of St. Riquier. To Charlemagne also are attributed various poetical pieces, consisting of an epitaph on Pope Adrian I., two short complimentary poems addressed to Paul Warnefrid, an epigram, and several other scraps of a similar kind. His biographer, Eginhard, attributes to him the authorship of a Teutonic grammar, for the composition of which, it is said, he laid under contribution the acquirements of all the men of learning at his court. He is said to have naturalized among the Franks the modern names of the twelve months of the year, and to have introduced those of the twelve winds; the names previously in use being those derived from the pagans of Germany. He also caused to be collected and recorded the ancient national songs and ballads of his countrymen, the sole monuments of the language and history of their turbulent forefathers. It has even been asserted that he carried his zeal so far as to translate the four evangelists from the Vulgate into the Teutonic; but this is most likely an exaggeration. The fact appears to be that he merely caused the Vulgate itself to be revised with the text of the Syriac and Greek. The '*Libri Carolini*,' sent to Pope Adrian by Engelbert, the object of which was to refute the errors of the oriental church, concerning the worship of images, and which drew from Adrian a long epistle in reply, has been attributed in turn to Charlemagne, Alcuin, and Angelramme; but recent critics have repudiated the claim of each of these authors, and ascribed the work, with much probability, to the great Council of Frankfort, which is believed to have entrusted its compilation to the most talented of its members.

Painting, sculpture, architecture, manufactures, and commerce, shared, with literature and music, the regard of the emperor. To adorn his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, he requested and obtained from Pope Adrian the Mosaic pavements of the Roman palace from Ravenna; and the illuminated manuscripts, the style and strength of the monasteries, fortresses and castles, with the statues and carved ornaments, the domestic furniture and the costume of the age, from the commencement of the ninth century, show a considerable advance in knowledge and refinement. Many of the improve-

ments then introduced were doubtless attributable to the Saracens, who in every art and science conducive to man's comfort and convenience, and to his elevation as a rational being, were greatly in advance of the Christians. Individuals of the Moslem creed appear to have been constantly maintained at the court of Charlemagne, and to have been treated there with kindness and consideration. Trade at the same time derived an impetus from the Jews, who had already begun their wanderings in Europe, and by diffusing a taste for the luxuries in which they chiefly dealt, had created a desire for capital in order to obtain them, and with it a corresponding spirit of enterprise. It has been justly observed, however, by one of the authors of the 'Pictorial History of England,' that "in the rude and turbulent ages which followed the overthrow of the Roman power in Europe, the existence of an extensive commerce in any hands was impossible. Almost continual wars everywhere, either between one people and another, or between two factions of the same people, or, where there was any temporary relaxation of war, the still more brutifying effects of misgovernment and oppression left no time, no inclination, and no means for carrying on any considerable commerce. The great mass of the people were in all countries sunk in ignorance and in poverty. Their miserable condition hardly permitted them to aspire after the enjoyment of anything beyond the absolute necessities of existence. They were untaught in those arts and processes of industry by which commerce is fed, there had been little or no accumulation of capital, without which there can be no extensive commerce, nor any other species of undertaking that looks much beyond the passing day. It was only by slow degrees that Europe emerged out of this condition, and that the beginnings of modern commerce were nurtured into strength and stability."

The frequent pilgrimages made at this time to Jerusalem were a means of greatly extending commerce. Devotees were in the habit of carrying with them such productions of their native land as were known to be in request in the various countries through which they journeyed; of selling or exchanging these from time to time, as they found it convenient to do so; and of bringing back with them commodities which were most esteemed by their own countrymen. So profitable was this kind of dealing, that many persons assumed the badge of pilgrimage merely to arrive at the gains of merchandise; and under a cloak of super-sanctity carried on the lucrative profession of smuggling. A letter from Charlemagne, written about the year 795, to Offa, King of Mercia, in England, has reference to this practice, and alludes at the same time to the customs, or port dues, which had been payable upon the importation of goods from the date of the Roman settlement, in Gaul and Britain. It commences, "Charles, by the grace of God, King of the Franks and Lombards, and Patrician of the Romans, to our venerable and most dear brother Offa, King of the Mercians, greeting. First, we give thanks to Almighty God for the sincere Catholic faith which we see so laudably expressed in your letters. Concerning the strangers, who, for the

love of God and the salvation of their souls, wish to repair to the thresholds of the blessed apostles, let them travel in peace without any trouble ; but if any be found among them, not in the service of religion, but in pursuit of gain, let them pay the established duties at the proper places. We will also that merchants shall have lawful protection in our kingdom, according to our command ; and if they are in any place unjustly aggrieved, let them apply to us or to our judges, and we shall take care that ample justice be done to them."

In his private life, Charlemagne appears to have been by no means blameless. Though his capitularies were strict in condemnation of adulterers, he himself maintained no less than nine females as wives and concubines, and his conduct towards his own daughters has been represented in the most flagrant light. That he had little of the feeling which would now pass under the name of humanity, was evinced by his treatment of the children of his brother Carloman ; of the unhappy Saxons whom he massacred, or reduced to slavery ; and of the chiefs of the vanquished Huns. These transactions were as barbarous as anything in the conduct of those against whom he warred, and tended to perpetuate, by furnishing a precedent and sanction for, the fierceness and brutality he was desirous of superseding ; and it was this, probably, which produced that spirit of hostility to his race which manifested itself towards the close of his reign, and which eventually drove his descendants from the throne which, with so much labour, his father and himself had constructed. The bravest and most indomitable of the Saxons fled to the country of the Danes, the Swedes, and the Norwegians ; and by their energetic eloquence, and the tales they were enabled to tell of the wealth and luxury of the Franks and Italians, they aroused the courage and avarice of the hardy Northmen, and induced them to quit their rugged and barren coasts, to launch their prows upon the ocean, and to fill the seas around the British Isles and the shores of France, Spain, and Italy, with piracy and slaughter.

But notwithstanding the remorselessness of Charlemagne to his enemies, he was a liberal protector of his friends and of those who sought refuge at his court. Prince Egbert, who afterwards united under his sceptre the various kingdoms of the English Heptarchy, was sheltered by him for fourteen or fifteen years, when he fled from Brihtric, who had usurped the throne of Wessex and set a price upon the Atheling's head. It was in the camp of the French monarch that he acquired that knowledge of the art of war which enabled him to defeat the less skilful princes of his native land ; and in the Frank court he learned those accomplishments for which he was afterwards celebrated by the chroniclers. At his departure for England, in year 800, Egbert was honoured with the gift of the emperor's own sword. Eadburgha, also, daughter of Offa the Mercian, and widow of Brihtric, whom she had poisoned, being expelled from England for her crimes, solicited and found an asylum with Charlemagne, who assigned her a residence

in a convent or abbey. The wanton and depraved queen, however, did not long enjoy this protection. Her vicious conduct was such that she was driven in disgrace from France; and some years afterwards "the widow of the King of the West Saxons, and daughter of the monarch of all England south of the Humber," recognised by her foreign mien and faded beauty, was seen begging alms in the streets of Pavia in Italy, where she is believed to have ended her days in destitution and misery.

Gibbon, concluding his summary of the character of Charlemagne, says, "The dignity of his person, the length of his reign, the prosperity of his arms, the vigour of his government, and the reverence of distant nations, distinguished him from the royal crowd; and Europe dates a new era from the restoration of the Western Empire." The stature of the Emperor is said to have been about six feet one inch. The old romancers increase it to eight feet; and adduce, as instances of his enormous strength and appetite, that, with a single stroke of his good sword, *Joyeuse*, he cut asunder a horseman and his horse; and that he devoured, at one meal, a goose, two fowls, and a quarter of mutton. Charlemagne died in the year 814, and his son Louis, who had been surnamed *the Pious*, from his excessive superstition, and *the Débonnaire*, from his want of energy and decision, which was mistaken for mildness and good nature, and who happened to be at Doué at the time, instantly hastened to Aix-la-Chapelle, and was at once recognised as emperor and King of the Franks and Lombards, in presence of the princes and nobles of the empire, and of the ambassadors who had been sent from the court of Constantinople.

The first act of Louis was to purify the palace of Charlemagne. He drove thence the numerous wives and concubines of the deceased emperor, and even the imperial princesses and their paramours, whose licentious lives now suddenly became a scandal to the clergy, who, as tutors to the young monarch, had already acquired great influence over his mind. The female culprits were consigned for the remainder of their lives to various convents, and their lovers were banished. Two of the descendants of Charles Martel, Wala and Adhalard, who during the last reign had distinguished themselves as able and active ministers, were also expelled the court, and restricted to the limits of their monasteries. A national assembly was then convoked at Aix-la-Chapelle, whence *missi dominici* were sent into the several provinces of the realm, to report on the local administration of justice. The prisons were opened to all political offenders; those who had been banished for state offences were recalled from exile and restored to their honours and estates; and the church was gratified not only with a confirmation of all that had been conferred upon it by Charlemagne, but with new and important donations. The veneration of Louis for men of religion led him indeed to make to them greater concessions than any other prince of his race; though, it must be observed, it was the constant policy of all the Carolingians, with the single exception perhaps of Charles

Martel, to pamper and exalt the clergy, who, as they acquired power and influence, were enabled to offer a formidable opposition to the leudes, whom it was desired to humble. Pepin and Charlemagne nevertheless had tempered their generosity with discretion. Rome, Ravenna, and the whole Italian exarchate, had, it is true, been conferred upon the pontiff; but the Frank monarchs had preserved the substantial rule of those provinces as protectors, and the papal cities and subjects were numbered, for all political purposes, among those of the empire. The imbecile Louis, on the contrary, did all that he could to render the pope independant, and to establish him as a wealthy and influential temporal sovereign.

At the same national assembly in which these changes were wrought, Bernard, a nephew of Charlemagne, was invested, according to the will of his uncle, with the kingdom of Italy, and did homage for his crown; and Lothaire and Pepin, two of the sons of Louis, were appointed to the government of Bavaria and Aquitaine. It was soon seen, however, that the governing mind and spirit which had erected the empire no longer presided over it. The Saxons and Danes recommenced their inroads, and the Saracens began again to exhibit the restlessness of their race within the mountain limits to which they had been confined. There seems, however, to have fallen a strange lassitude over Europe at the period. No great man started forth to direct or concentrate the energies of his fellows on any single point or object, and after a few turbulent heavings, the sea of passion which had threatened to effect so much of alteration, gradually subsided into a calm. Heriold, a chief of the northmen, was bribed to act in opposition to his countrymen, against whose incursions the Danish frontier was fortified by Count Balderic, in 815. The Frisons and Saxons were conciliated by a grant of the right of inheriting such lands as they defended, and of which they had been deprived by Charlemagne; and the Moors of Spain were restrained from invasion by the dissensions which were continually breaking out among their own ranks.

The Saxons and a number of Danish chiefs took the oath of allegiance to the emperor at a diet which met at Paderborn, in 815; where also appeared some envoys from Pope Leo III. to solicit aid against the factions which divided Rome. The population of the eternal city, which still contained numbers of families in whose veins ran the undiluted blood of the ancient rulers of the world, were not yet wholly disposed to submit to the ignominious sway of a priest, but chafed in the bonds imposed on their souls and bodies. They were compelled to yield, however, by the arms of Bernard, King of Italy; and Leo dying about the same time, Stephen IV. adopted a milder line of conduct towards his subjects, and thus reconciled them in some degree to their lot. Stephen himself made a journey, shortly after his election, into France, and being met by Louis at Rheims, he there consecrated the Emperor and the Empress Hermengarde, and placed on their heads the imperial crown; in return for which, the emperor promul-

gated a capitulary for the better ordering and conformity of the church, in which, among other things, all the monasteries (for men) throughout the empire were subjected to the severe rule of St. Benedict of Aniane.

In the month of July, 817, Louis published, in the assembly at Aix-la-Chapelle, a still more important capitulary: that, namely, which divided the empire, and established its constitution. In this document, his three sons, Lothaire, Pepin, and Louis, were associated with himself in the government. Lothaire took the title of emperor and colleague of his father; Pepin became King of Aquitaine and Burgundy; and Louis of Bavaria and the Slavonian Marches. The empire, nevertheless, was declared to be indivisible; and every year the four sovereigns were to meet, and concert measures for their future guidance. This measure was not without specious advantages. The gigantic dominions which had been united by Charlemagne might have been preserved in their integrity with infinitely less difficulty as a federative body than as a single state; but the realm was already undergoing the process of premature decay, and Louis le Débonnaire was not the man to arrest the ravages of dissolution, or to impart to the Western Empire new life and vigour. Scarcely had the decree for partition gone forth, before a civil war arose to render its benefits nugatory. The Italian monarch, Bernard, who saw that his kingdom was given, at the death of his cousin Louis, to the young Lothaire, naturally enough conceived that such a disposition was unjust and tyrannical, and at once made preparation to resist such a stretch of the imperial authority. Under the counsel of Engelbert, abbot of St. Riquier, Regnier, count of the palace, Reginald, formerly grand chamberlain, and Theodulf, bishop of Orléans, a minister of Charlemagne, he adopted means for collecting an army, declared his independence, and took up a defensive position at the foot of the Alps. His advisers, however, betrayed all his movements to Louis, who quietly despatched a large army in quest of him, and frustrated all his plans before they were matured. Indeed, his councillors had contrived to plant their snare so that Bernard should at once fall into it. Seeing that he had no hope, therefore, in resistance, the king resolved to throw himself on the mercy of the emperor; and for that purpose hastened into France, met Louis at Châlons-sur-Saône, and, affrighted at the imperial menaces, revealed all his accomplices. These were instantly arrested, even the bishops—the personal interests of the emperor being stronger than his piety—and brought to judgment in an assembly of the Franks, at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 818. The empress, Hermengarde, it is said, passed judgment upon the culprits, all of whom were condemned to death. Louis, however, commuted the sentence. The bishops were deprived of their sees and banished, or shut up in remote monasteries; and the rest, with Bernard at their head, had their eyes put out. The unhappy king expired three days after the execution of this cruel sentence; his death being attributed, however, not so much to the loss of his sight as to tortures

subsequently inflicted upon him, by order of Hermengarde ; who, it may be added, did not long survive her victim, but died in October, 818.

During the proceedings against Bernard and his companions, several minor expeditions were undertaken against the Obotrites and Bretons, who had revolted, or, more properly, resumed their predatory warfare against the Franks. These hardy people had never been conquered, and they maintained their independence for years afterwards ; in fact, long after the Carolingian race had become extinct, they paid nothing to the sovereigns of France but a nominal allegiance. The Basques of Navarre, the Catalonians, and the Gascons of Aquitaine, rose in insurrection about the same time with the Bretons. A rising of the Pannonian slaves took place also, and, immediately afterwards, the hideous and ominous aspect of the fierce Bulgarians was displayed in Italy. The bounds of the empire were narrowing on all sides ; and the courage, discipline, and perseverance of the *Barbarians*—as all who were not partisans of the Frank were now called, in the same manner as the enemies of the Romans had been of old—gave token of a long and terrible struggle ; especially as the efforts of foreign foes were aided so well by internal discord, and by the private feuds and animosities of the leudes and the church. The entire elements of society seemed once more to be crumbling away and falling into inextricable confusion ; and the result was a long period of anarchy, bloodshed, and national retrogression.

Louis himself, after the death of Hermengarde, had hesitated for some time, whether he should endeavour to remedy the disorders which his feeble administration had permitted to arise, or should consult his personal ease by retiring from the throne to a convent. The love of power prevailed ; and in order to supply the place of the deceased empress, in his councils as well as his affections, he espoused the talented, but unprincipled Judith—a daughter of Welf or Welf, a Bavarian count. Learned and elegant to a degree far beyond the people of her native country or even the Franks, this lady soon acquired complete ascendancy over her husband, and was thus enabled to exalt the influence of the polished courtiers of Southern France, over that of the more warlike subjects of the emperor ; a matter of little difficulty, perhaps, since Louis had been educated among the Aquitanians, and had always exhibited a marked predilection for their manners and customs. Hence Bernard, the son of St. William, of Toulouse, the ancient tutor of the monarch, became his chief favourite, and obtained, it is said, a still higher place in the regard of the empress. This partiality for the Aquitanians was the pretext for the outbreak which ensued, though the discontent, which was its real cause, was of older growth and more important origin ;—arising chiefly from the general relaxation of authority, and the consequent insecurity universally felt in a state of society, which, being new, required for its consolidation the vigorous maintenance of public order. The audible murmurings of the Frank chiefs, however, were disregarded. The exiles who

had been concerned with Bernard, King of Italy, were pardoned. Wala and Adhalard were recalled to court from the monasteries, whither they had been sent at the commencement of the reign; the possessions and honours of the accomplices of Bernard were restored to them; and in 822, in a general assembly, held at the palace of Attigny, the emperor, at the instigation of Judith, not only made public confession of his faults and errors, but avowed the murder of Bernard, and solicited pardon of three of his illegitimate brothers for the offence of having imprisoned them in a convent at his accession. The Franks could scarcely fail to perceive in these things a condemnation of their own conduct in 818, and finding their counsel abandoned, and their measures denounced, they turned to another quarter for support and encouragement. The young Lothaire was the prince on whom they now fixed their hopes. He was bold, ambitious and able, and taking advantage of the increasing disaffection towards his father, he caused himself to be crowned emperor—the title previously conferred on him by Louis—on Easter-day, 823, in the church of St. Peter at Rome, by Pope Pascal. This was no mere formality. The right of the pope to confer substantial titles, and the power attaching thereto, had been acknowledged by Pepin, by Charlemagne, and by Louis; and was indeed undisputed at that period by princes and people. In seeking to make a party for himself in the empire, therefore, it was necessary for Lothaire to be armed with the sanction of the church to his claims, before he could rely upon the support of those who believed the church to be the delegated agent of omnipotence in matters temporal as well as spiritual. His motives, it may be added, were not altogether unjustifiable; he saw his rights and authority menaced. His father, in fixing the Constitution and parting his dominions at Aix-la-Chapelle, had not calculated upon an addition to his family, but, since his marriage with Judith, another son, Charles, had been born to him, and he had been induced to carve from the realm bestowed on Lothaire, an inheritance for the infant.

But notwithstanding the symptoms of disaffection manifested by Lothaire, the empress, by her consummate skill in the arts of insinuation and flattery, not only prevailed on him to lay aside all hostile intentions, but to accept for a space the guardianship and tutelage of her son. Judith, however, was unable to obtain any permanent influence over the mind of the prince. He soon repented of his hasty condescension, and his animosity was heightened by the conviction that he had been duped and outwitted. The ambition and haughtiness of the empress indeed, and the insolent pride and assumption of her minion, Bernard, gradually became such, that not only had Lothaire reason to believe that his longer acquiescence would lead to his being despoiled of his entire heritage in favour of Louis's latest born; but the Frank nobles considered their lives and fortunes in jeopardy. The father-in-law of the young emperor, Count Hugo, together with Count Matfred, had already narrowly escaped death on an accusation of having prevented

the success of the favourite, in some operation undertaken by him against the Saracens of Catalonia; and the general arrogance of the predominant faction at court grew daily more intolerable. The Franks, in resentment, openly formed a confederacy for the purpose of determining the odious rule of the empress and her friends. The old emperor was deserted by all the ministers and agents of his father, who recognised Lothaire as their head, and joined in the popular outcry for a thorough reform of the administration;—even Wala, who had been freed from his monastic trammels, quitted his side and took part with his son. He indeed it was, who in a great national assembly, took upon himself the office of public accuser, and charged the emperor as being the occasion of all the disorders which prevailed in the state. Louis, appealing against the popular clamour, in vain summoned four great councils—at Mayence, Paris, Toulouse and Lyons—and submitted to them specious projects of reform with regard to the clergy, the administration, and the government of his household; it could not be concealed that his wife still continued to direct his councils, and Bernard his favourite, instead of being dismissed, was thrust more prominently forward—being created Duke of Septimania, and great chamberlain, an office of which the privileges were nearly equal to those of the ancient mayors of the palace. The discontent, so far from being allayed, was, therefore, greatly increased, and an amicable arrangement was rendered more difficult and less desired.

Judith meanwhile, taking advantage of the deceitful calm which reigned throughout the empire, assembled a diet at Worms [829], for the purpose of gaining the consent of the nation to the appropriation of territory destined for her son Charles. The council assigned to the prince those portions of Germany which were situated between the Rhine, the Main, the Neker, and the Danube, together with Transjurane, Burgundy, and Rætia, or the country of the Grisons. This compliance, though not conformable to the wishes of the empress, was deemed by her and Bernard as a victory over the partisans of Lothaire, and was vaunted accordingly; but it was not long before they found that they had miscalculated their influence, and that they were abandoned by the whole of the leudes, on whose returning allegiance they had counted. The quarrel now became an open one. Wala afforded the court a last opportunity of conciliation, by offering himself as mediator between the contending factions; but his interference was haughtily rejected by Bernard, and he was thus driven back into the ranks of the emperor's enemies. He was speedily followed by the most influential of the clergy—Hildwin, abbot of St. Denis; Bernard, bishop of Vienna; Agobard, bishop of Lyons; Jessé, of Amiens; Eli, of Troyes; Herebold, of Auxerre; and Barthlemy, of Narbonne. The leudes ranged themselves under the banners of Matfried and Hugo, and numbered among them Count Lantbert, commander of the Breton Marches, Bernaire, brother of Wala, and Counts Godfried, Aginbert, and Richard.

Pepin, King of Aquitaine, had as yet taken no part in the disputes by

which the empire was rent. His father consequently reckoned with confidence upon his support. An opportunity soon presented itself for testing his fidelity. The Bretons, who, after their revolt in 818, had been reduced to at least nominal subjection, during an expedition conducted by Louis in person in 825, now again threw off the yoke, expelled the count, or judge, of the province, imposed on them by the emperor, and once more declared their independence. Louis, who was at Aix-la-Chapelle when news of these revolts reached him, sent instant orders to Pepin to advance against the rebels, and gave directions for assembling an army round the imperial standard, with which he might march in person to support him. He had the mortification, however, to find, not only that his son was disobedient, but that the major part of his own troops refused to march at his bidding. Chagrined and humiliated, he withdrew to seek refuge with his third son, the King of Bavaria; but here again he was disappointed. Filial affection was weaker in the breasts of his children than ambition, and the younger Louis, when he saw that his brother, Pepin, had become master of Orléans, by chasing thence Count Odo, and establishing Matfried in his place, and that Paris had surrendered to the insurgents, abandoned his father, and made common cause with the young emperor, the King of Aquitaine, and the leudes.

Louis, seeing that any attempt at resistance to the overwhelming force arrayed against him must needs be hopeless, now thought to conciliate his foes by separating from his obnoxious empress and chamberlain. Bernard retired to Barcelona, the capital of the Spanish March, and Judith sought an asylum in the convent of St. Maria, at Laon. His children, however, were inexorable. Pepin hastened to Verberie, near Compiègne, where he encamped immediately in front of the little army which remained faithful to his father, and prepared to offer him battle. At the same time [830] Judith was dragged from the convent of St. Maria and consigned to that of St. Radegonde, at Poitiers, where she was forced to take the veil. Louis then threw himself upon the clemency of his son, before whom he appeared, in presence of the army, as a suppliant for his life and freedom. His many sorrows and degradation are said to have affected even his enemies to tears. Pepin, however, detained him prisoner till the arrival of Lothaire, whose object appears to have been the formal deposition of his father, and the assumption for himself of the imperial sceptre. His first acts, on reaching Verberie, were to put out the eyes of Herbert, the brother of Bernard the grand chamberlain, to banish Count Odo from the realm, and to compel Conrad and Rodolf, the brothers of the Empress Judith, to receive the tonsure and cowl. Immediately afterwards he proposed the dethronement of Louis; but this the King of Bavaria opposed with all his power, and it was at last agreed that the unhappy old man should remain a prisoner with his beloved son Charles, under the care of two monks and the active surveillance of Lothaire.

An understanding was now sought respecting the partition of the empire. It was readily agreed among the three brothers that the child of Judith should be excluded from all share in the inheritance of their common father; but when Lothaire expressed his determination to adhere to the constitution of 817, by which a superiority had been conceded to him over his brothers, Pepin and Louis became at once dissatisfied, and repented of the part they had taken against their parent. The leudes and the clergy also, who were natives, not of one but of several nations, and had hoped to see their respective countries restored to independence, considered that they had been betrayed, and became thenceforth luke-warm in the service of a master who had deceived them. The imprisoned Louis, in the pulpit, and consequently among the people, acquired the name of the *Good* and the *Pious* Emperor, and was soon extolled for virtues which he had never possessed; but which were attributed to him with some plausibility, since their opposite vices were generally known to be absent. This reaction in his favour re-animated the old man's hopes. He sought to establish an understanding with the monks,



under whose guard he had been placed, and succeeded in winning one of them, named Guntbald, or Gombauld, to become the agent of a correspondence with the leudes, who were favourable to him, and with his sons Pepin and Louis, who were at length induced to enter into an agreement to restore



Submission of Lothaire.

their father to his throne, and to protect him against all hostile attempts on the part of their eldest brother. The time fixed for this movement was the general assembly of autumn, which it was decided should be held at Nimeguen on the German frontier—the Germans being more attached to Louis than the Franks.

“All Germany,” says Astronomus, in his ‘Life of Louis the Pious,’ “hastened to the rendezvous with offers of aid to the emperor,” who had but to exhibit himself to obtain full restitution of his authority. It could scarcely have been conceived that the sovereign now received with such hearty acclamations had ever been the object of general odium. In the plenitude of his sudden popularity and power Louis saw himself for a moment indeed a monarch; and he was not slow to furnish proofs that adversity had not taught him wisdom. Instead of seeking to conciliate both friends and enemies by moderation, he thought only of compensation and retaliation. Count Lantbert was sent back to the Breton March; Hildwin, the abbot of St. Denis, was exiled without a hearing to Paderborn; and Wala was dismissed once more to his monastery of Corbie. The minor abettors of the rebellion were condemned to death; but Louis, who knew that his sons were in reality the most guilty parties, prevented any effusion of blood. Jessé, bishop of Amiens, was the only prelate deposed; the rest of the conspirators, as well the nobles as the clergy, were merely imprisoned in various monasteries.

Immediately after this triumph, the emperor returned to his palace of Aix-la-Chapelle, whence he sent messengers to consult Pope Gregory IV. and the Frank bishops, concerning the absolution of the empress from her vows, which had been forced upon her, and they at once pronounced those obligations of no effect, and decided that Judith might re-appear at court, and resume her place beside her husband. The empress lost no time in recalling her two brothers, Conrad and Rodolf. Bernard, the grand chamberlain, was next declared innocent of any crime, and restored to all his honours and possessions; and Prince Lothaire, who came and threw himself at his father’s feet to solicit pardon, though deprived of his title as emperor, was permitted to retain the kingdom of Italy, on taking an oath that he would never again oppose the will of his father.

It is not known what benefit the young Prince Charles derived from this new settlement; but Pepin and Louis obtained considerable accessions to their dominions. The first, among several other Neustrian countries, had Angers conferred on him, to which the suzerainty of Septimania is believed to have been added; and the limits of Louis’s German kingdom were increased from the territories of the ancient sovereignty of Austrasia. The three eldest sons of the emperor were then sent back to their respective capitals, and France itself was left once more to the feeble government of Louis, and the intrigues of Judith and Bernard, to whom was now added the monk, Gombauld, whose agency in effecting the emperor’s liberation

had rendered him of no small importance in the eyes of the monarch. Gombauld, indeed, had entirely supplanted Bernard in his master's affections; and the court itself was consequently divided between the partisans of the emperor's favourite and those of the minion of the empress.

The first act of Gombauld was a popular one, namely, the publication of an amnesty to all who had formerly taken part against the emperor. Louis himself had wished to include Wala in this general pardon, and to recall him to court; but the monk, who had been recently removed from Corbie to a convent situated on a rock near the Lake of Geneva, obstinately refused to quit his retirement, or to enter the service of the emperor; and, accordingly, being deemed too near a neighbour to the vanquished Lothaire, whose discontent and ambition had not been quelled by reverses, he was taken from Geneva, and sent first to Noirmotiers, and thence, on a suspicion of his being able to correspond with Pepin, into Germany; whence, considering that Louis of Bavaria might avail himself of the talents of the priest, he was removed back to his original cell at Corbie; but was stripped of his title and authority as abbot.

Meanwhile Bernard, finding himself reduced to a mere cipher in the imperial councils, retired in disgust from Aix-la-Chapelle to his province of Languedoc, where he opened a secret correspondence with Pepin, for the purpose of again exciting the animosity of the prince against his father. It needed little to stir the rebellious spirit of this young man, who lent a willing ear to all who had schemes of aggrandisement to suggest. His brother Louis was also found to be ready for a new revolt;—the pretext assigned for their dissatisfaction by both, being that their dominions had not been sufficiently enlarged at the last partition; that Prince Charles had no right to a share of the empire; and that Judith and Gombauld should be deprived of all power to interfere in the public administration. Before any measures could be matured by the two kings, however, Gombauld obtained a knowledge of their intrigues, and at the national assembly, which met at Thionville in the autumn of 831, Pepin and Bernard, who were present, were openly accused of the designs they entertained. But as nothing could be proved against them they were acquitted, and Bernard was suffered to return to his government; Pepin, nevertheless, was detained and sent to Aix-la-Chapelle, whence he contrived one night to elude his guards, and fly with all speed into Aquitaine.

Louis, enraged, summoned a great council in the following May at Orléans, whence he appears to have meditated a descent into the territories of his son; but scarcely had the assembly met, when it was ascertained that Louis of Bavaria had taken the field in order to invade the German provinces not included in his realm, and that it was his purpose, when these should be conquered, to pass the Rhine, and strike a blow for the imperial crown. The diet was forthwith transported to Mayence, and orders issued for arraying all the troops and militia of Franko-Germany and Saxony. Pepin was left

to pursue his course unmolested, while his father turned towards the north-east; and after deliberating in the new assembly for a single day, the



imperial army, with more of promptitude than had of late characterised its movements, marched to meet the enemy. The King of Bavaria, who had encamped near Worms, was astonished at the sudden and unexpected energy of his opponents, and instead of awaiting their approach, his troops fled and dispersed. In this perplexity, Louis saw no resource but to appeal once more to the clemency of the emperor. He hastened accordingly to the imperial camp on the banks of the Lech, received a ready pardon, and on taking a new oath of fidelity, was left in possession of his kingdom.

Returning to Mayence, the emperor found there his son, Lothaire, who came in friendship to renew his homage, and to accompany him to the previously disturbed council of Orléans. This meeting was convoked for September, 832. Pepin and Bernard were now in vain summoned to attend, and on their refusal the emperor crossed the Loire, traversed a large portion of Aquitaine, and opened the assembly at Jucondiac, a royal residence, some few leagues distant from Limoges. Here, finding that their further obstinacy would avail them little, both Pepin and Bernard appeared before their accusers, and were both convicted of infidelity to the emperor. Bernard was stripped of his duchy of Septimania and county of Barcelona, which were given to Bérenger, son of Henry, Count of Tours; and Pepin, after being despoiled of his kingdom of Aquitaine, which was bestowed upon his half-brother, Charles, then nine years of age, was sent prisoner, under a strong escort, to Trèves.

The troubles of the pious emperor, however, were not yet ended. Scarcely had he reached Tours, on his return, when he received intelligence of the new flight of Pepin into Aquitaine. Louis instantly returned upon his track; but after a brief and futile campaign, he was forced to re-pass the Loire; and proceeded to Aix-la-Chapelle, whence, in December, he issued a formal decree of disinheritance against Pepin, and declared the boy Charles his successor, who subsequently did homage for his new realm. The sentence of deposition against Pepin, however, was inoperative. The kings of Italy and Bavaria made common cause with him of Aquitaine; and, on this occasion, all seemed determined on the definitive dethronement of the old emperor. In order to render the confederation against Louis *le Débonnaire* more formidable, Pope Gregory IV. was induced to join it by Lothaire. Indeed, he required but little persuasion to a step so consonant in all respects to his own interest. The occasion of exhibiting to the world the pontifical power to make and unmake emperors was not to be lost or neglected. The church had asserted its supremacy from the date of the appeal of Pepin, and had exercised it in exalting Charlemagne to the throne of the Western Empire. It had now but apparently to re-assert its high prerogative, in order to fix its claim beyond a chance of future dispute. Louis must have looked with dismay upon the preparations for his overthrow; but, under the guidance of the spirited Gombauld, he betrayed less pusillanimity than was his wont. He even took the initiative in active measures against his adversaries. In May, 833, he summoned a diet at Worms, and commanded the energetic co-operation of all the chiefs, the military and civil officers, the dukes and counts, and the bishops, abbots, and inferior clergy of the empire, in putting the realm in an efficient posture of defence. "The aid of the sword and the word," according to Fauriel, were both requisite to meet the exigencies of the times; and both were given without stint, though not, it may be believed from prior and subsequent events, with the best faith or intentions towards him who was yet acknowledged as sovereign.

The empress, Judith, and her son, Charles, accompanied Louis to Worms, where they celebrated the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide, and remained to watch the movements of their enemies, who soon after united their forces at Bâle, and commenced their march upon Colmar. The emperor then encamped in a plain, between Strasburg and the hostile army. "It was a painful thing," says a French historian, "to see, on the one side, the old emperor forced to appear in arms against his sons; and, on the other, his children, assisted by the pope, the head of the Christian church, launching against him an insidious manifesto,—the gentle and reasonable tone of which was better calculated than one of greater violence to shake the fidelity of his people." Still the courage of Louis, or, rather, of Gombauld, increased in proportion to the magnitude of the danger. He caused the bishops of his party to write to Gregory, threatening him with

excommunication for the unchristian part he was taking on behalf of those whom he had formerly stigmatised as rebels. This was a bold and statesmanlike thought, and, had it been promptly carried into effect, might have reduced papal infallibility to a premature level; but Louis hesitated, and Gregory, acting on the counsel of Wala, who had withdrawn once more from Corbie, and taken refuge with the pope, changed his character for that of mediator between the emperor and his sons, and thus avoided the



crisis. His efforts, however, at conciliation, as probably was intended, were fruitless; and it was finally resolved, to rest the decision of all differences between the contending parties on the result of a battle.

The armies now drew near each other, "in a vast plain, called the Red-field, (*Rothfield*), but which, from the event of which it then became the theatre, took its more celebrated name of the Field of Falsehood." Under the banners of Louis were ranged the Franks, the conquering soldiers of Charles Martel, of Pepin, and Charlemagne; and under those of the rebellious princes were the Aquitanians, the Italians, and the Germans,—the people whom Charlemagne, and his father, and grandfather, had subdued and forcibly united under one sceptre—impatient to throw off the yoke they bore, and to re-establish their independence. The expected struggle for mastery, nevertheless, did not occur. Louis was betrayed by those in whom he had confided. In a single night, his whole army passed from his

side to that of his son, Lothaire. At dawn, says Theganus, but a handful of faithful followers remained to obey or defend him. "Leave me," said the emperor to this remnant, "leave me, and go to my sons; I wish not that any should suffer loss or injury for my sake." The sight of the helpless and desolate old man, and his kindheartedness—that best of all the weaknesses of humanity—affected even the sturdy veterans who surrounded him to tears. On their withdrawal, Louis mounted his horse, and, taking with him his wife and young son, Charles, went over to the camp of his enemies; but though he was received there with a show of respect, he was at no loss to perceive that this was mere affectation, since the empress Judith was immediately separated from him, and committed to the custody of Pepin, preparatory to her being sent prisoner to Tortona, and Prince Charles was placed under other guard.

In the ensuing month of July [833], an assembly of bishops was held, who declared that Louis had forfeited the imperial throne, which, of right, therefore, appertained to Lothaire. The three brothers then made a new partition of the empire, and their leudes obtained new grants and honours out of the forfeited estates of the adherents of their father. "When every thing was concluded," says M. Burette, "nearly all concerned but the pope, and Wala, above all, seemed astonished and affrighted, at the success of their daring enterprise." It was, indeed, ominous for the stability and welfare of the empire, when its sceptre was regarded as a common chattel, subject to princely barter and agreement, and the allegiance of the people could be transferred from one to another without enquiry or care. It was most especially ominous for the infant civilisation of France, when the administration of the country was the object of such frequent conflict and settlement. It might almost be said, on looking at the distracted state of the nation, during the reign, or rather the life, of his son, that Charlemagne had lived and laboured in vain. Improvement of any kind was totally out of the question. Even the ground that had been won could not be maintained; the boundaries of science and learning continually receded; and, but for the accumulated records of what had been effected, the reflux of barbarism must have reduced the entire realm to its primitive mental and moral desolation and hideousness.

Pepin and Louis withdrew at once to their respective dominions; and Lothaire, dragging his father in his train from Colmar to Marlem, or Mareuil, thence to Metz, and finally to Soissons, consigned him there to the monastery of St. Médard; while the young Charles had his head shaven, and was shut up in the abbey of Prum.

In the beginning of October, the new emperor held a solemn *plaid*, or council, at Compiègne. Neither Pepin nor Louis presented himself at this assembly, and, consequently, the proceedings were subject to the uncontrolled influence and direction of Lothaire, who, after causing his own election to the imperial throne to be ratified, compelled his father to recog-

nise, in the presence of the clergy, the nobles, and the people, a catalogue of the various actions of his life, drawn up by the bishops opposed to him, whereby he was said to have offended God, and to have deserved chastisement. "This absurd confession," says Michelet, "having been read to him, in the church of St. Médard and St. Sebastian of Soissons, the unhappy Louis in no point disputed it; but subscribed all its allegations, humiliated himself as far as he was bidden, confessed himself thrice guilty, wept, and requested to do public penance, in order to atone for the scandals he had occasioned. He laid aside his military baldrick, and put on sack-cloth; and in this wretched guise, humbled and degraded, his son sent him to the capital of the empire, to Aix-la-Chapelle—the same city where, in former days, Charlemagne had caused him to take the crown from the altar."

But though the Frank nobles and people had endured, they could not sanction, the outrages inflicted on their ancient emperor. All classes felt indignant against the unworthy son who could thus treat a father from whom he had so often received pardon for the highest crimes. All the goodness of the old man was remembered; all the offences of Lothaire magnified, and the latter, his minister Ebbon, archbishop of Rheims, said to be the principal author of the act of accusation against Louis, together with Wala and Agobard, who had drawn up and published a manifesto entitled "An Apology for the sons of the Emperor, Louis le Débonnaire, against their father," were held in universal odium. Even the kings of Aquitaine and Bavaria joined in the cry of execration against their brother; and by the beginning of the year 834 secret associations were formed in various parts of the empire to concert measures for a new revolution. The leaders in Neustria were Egbert, Count of Paris, and William, Count of Etoble; in Burgundy, Warin, or Garin, Count of Mâcon, and Gotzelin, brother of the grand chamberlain Bernard, and among the clergy, the two natural brothers of the deposed Louis, Drogon, bishop of Metz, and Hugo, abbot of St. Quentin. Preparations were soon made for the commencement of operations; and Lothaire learned with surprise that the troops of Pepin and Louis were in motion against him. The usurper, as the emperor's eldest son was now called, hastened with his father from Aix-la-Chapelle to St. Denis; whence, on the approach of the hostile forces, he withdrew towards the Rhone, after destroying the bridges of the Seine and the Marne. His retreat from St. Denis was so precipitate that he had no time to secure his most important prisoner, and the old emperor, Judith, and Prince Charles, consequently found themselves unexpectedly reunited in the midst of friends and champions. The bishops who were present in the camp of Louis and Pepin, absolved the liberated princes and empress from the interdicts of the church and from their monastic vows; and the decrees which had been passed at the plaid of Compiègne, were declared to be illegal and hateful. In a great assembly, held immediately afterwards at Kiersy-sur-Oise, Louis was formally recon-

ciled to his two sons, and solemnly restored Aquitaine to Pepin, whom he had disinherited, and who, on receiving this reinvestiture, returned to his dominions, while Louis of Bavaria proceeded with his father to Aix-la-Chapelle.

The aged emperor, notwithstanding the wrongs and indignities to which he had been subjected, was still desirous of avoiding a war with his son, and to that end he offered him a pardon, provided he would lay down his arms and retire to his kingdom of Italy. Lothaire, however, rejected the terms, and prepared for battle. At the commencement of hostilities the arms of Lothaire were victorious. An army commanded by Count Odo on behalf of Louis, was beaten on the borders of Britany by Counts Matfried and Lantbert; and Lothaire, encouraged by that success, hastened into Burgundy and laid siege at Châlons-sur-Saône, which after a brave defence, under Warin and Counts Gotzelin and Mandeline, was compelled to surrender at discretion. The vengeance of Lothaire for the obstinate resistance he had encountered was terrible. The military and inhabitants were put to the sword without mercy; and Gerberge, a sister of Bernard, the chamberlain, who was living in a convent in the city, was enclosed in a cask, and thrown into the Saône. Of the garrison, Warin alone was spared, and he only on condition of swearing fidelity and doing homage to his captor. The triumph of Lothaire, however, was short. Louis, after holding a national assembly at Langress, put himself at the head of his army, and accompanied by Pepin, he marched in quest of his rebellious son, whom he encountered near Blois. On this occasion the usurper failed in his efforts to win deserters from the ranks of his opponents, and finding that he was overmatched, he was fain to ride over to the camp of his father, crave access to his tent, and a second time solicit pardon on his knees for his manifold treasons. The emperor, who seemed incapable of entertaining a thought of animosity against his children, at once forgave him, merely stipulating that he should speedily depart for Italy, and renew his broken oath never again to quit that country without permission. A few days afterwards all the parties separated; Pepin returned to Aquitaine, Louis to Bavaria, Lothaire beyond the Alps, and the emperor to Aix-la-Chapelle—A.D. 835. In the course of that summer a number of those who had taken an active part in the recent troubles died; the bishops of Amiens and Troyes, Hugo the father-in-law of Lothaire, with Counts Matfried and Lantbert, Aginbert of Perches, and Godfried and his son Borgarit. In order to ensure the continuance of peace, and to repress the disorder which had sprung up on every side in the midst of commotion, the emperor convoked an assembly at Thionville. There he demanded justice on those bishops who had pronounced his deposition at Compiègne; but the majority saved themselves by flight to Italy. Elbon of Rheims alone appeared before the assembly, and he was deprived, and sent to end his life in exile and obscurity. Agobard, though absent, and some others, were also deposed. Wala withdrew to his monastery of Bobbir, beside the tomb

of St. Columb, where he not long afterwards died, exclaiming, it is said, "Wherefore was I born a man of quarrel and of discord?" From Thionville, the assembly was removed to Metz, where Bishop Dregon performed a solemn reinvestiture of the emperor, and crowned him anew.

The following year passed without important events. The empress busied herself in securing the welfare of her son Charles, to whom no realm had as yet been assigned, since Germany had been snatched from him by his brothers. She endeavoured to attach Lothaire to her interest, by flattering him with the hope of recovering what he had lost; and succeeded in some measure to her wish; so that, when she thought the time sufficiently ripe, she ventured on making the emperor decide in presence of his council, to give Germany and the whole kingdom of Neustria to his beloved son [837]. The new partition was prevented, however, at the national assembly of Aix-la-Chapelle. The realm of Charles was somewhat curtailed of the dimensions assigned by his mother in the private conference, but several counties in Burgundy and Austrasia were conferred upon him instead. Louis, of Bavaria, alone was present at that meeting, Pepin having merely sent deputies; but the former retired discontented, and went to open a communication with Lothaire. The emperor, however, on this occasion, was on his guard, and summoned Louis, to justify himself from all thoughts of rebellion, to Aix-la-Chapelle. The prince hastened thither accordingly, and protested his fidelity; but refused to assist at the *plaid* of Kiersey, in September, 837, where the fate of Prince Charles was definitively settled. The partition last made at Aix-la-Chapelle was confirmed and highly approved by Pepin; but his support was immediately afterwards lost to the son of Judith, through his death, which happened in December, in the same year. He left two sons, Pepin and Charles, who were at once disinherited by the council; and the question arose as to which of three sons of the emperor should in future possess Aquitaine. Judith asserted that the other dominions of Louis were too distant to afford him any pretensions to the government, and hence the rich heritage was divided between Lothaire and Charles. The object appears to have been to impose on the former an obligation, for his own sake, to become the protector of his half-brother. The emperor then required his attendance at Worms, received him kindly, and entered with him upon the business of the partition. The Meuse was chosen as the boundary of the two states, with the county of Burgundy as far as the Rhone. The state of Charles, consequently, comprised the country lying between the Meuse, the Transjurane Alps, the Rhone, and the Ocean, with all the possessions of the Franks beyond the Pyrenees; while Lothaire had all the remainder, except only Bavaria. Louis, disgusted at his exclusion, had recourse once more to arms, and incited all the races east of the Rhone to join him; while, in Aquitaine, the young Pepin, surrounded by the friends of his father, made every effort to recover the throne of which he had been deprived.

In an assembly, held at Chalons-sur-Saône, to which all the Aquitanian leudes were called, homage was exacted from every one to the young Charles, and, subsequently, the contumacious were speedily reduced by force. Scarcely, however, had peace been restored to Aquitaine, when the war recommenced with Louis of Bavaria; but here the emperor had only to show himself, when his rebellious son withdrew. The aged father, exhausted by so many struggles against his children, now felt his end approaching; and, desirous not to leave the empire a prey to war, convoked a diet at Worms, for the purpose of establishing a durable peace. "A few days before the opening of the assembly, he was seized with sickness, and caused himself to be transported to a small island in the Rhone, near Iugelheim and Mayence. His feeble hand caressed the crown, the sword, and the golden sceptre, which he intended for Lothaire. They were the insignia of the empire he was going to transmit to him, on condition of keeping his word towards the young Charles and the empress. 'I pardon Louis,' he said; 'but it is he, who, despising the law of God, has brought to the grave the grey hairs of his father.'" He expired on the 20th of June, 840, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the twenty-seventh of his reign. He was buried at Metz, beside Queen Hildegarde, in the church of St. Arnoul.

Lothaire believed that he saw in the last will of his father an assent to his own project of maintaining the imperial unity. The empire was still as extensive as under Charlemagne, with the exception of a few eastern provinces occupied by the turbulent Slaves. But that vast body contained and nurtured within it the principles of dissolution; and to these were now added the private ambitions and jealousies of the princes, Louis and Charles, who could not endure to find more than an equal in their eldest brother. Everywhere the spirit of nationality and a desire for independence was felt—proceeding, however, principally from that egotism which was the soul of the feudal system, then struggling into birth; that every one should act for himself, and by himself; and to these causes of agitation were added the popular terror of new invasions of barbarians. Germany was constantly molested on her eastern frontiers by the Slaves and Huns, newly risen under the names of Avars and Hungarians; and France was compelled to be alert on her Atlantic and Mediterranean shores against the Northmen and the Saracens, who were also menacing Italy. The unity of the empire was therefore necessarily broken, and the attempts of Lothaire to restore it, only hastened the crisis.

Louis, meanwhile, remained quietly gathering strength to oppose the projects of his eldest brother in Germany. The King of Aquitaine, however, had more difficulty with his subjects, who had never voluntarily submitted to the Frank domination, and who now revolted against Charles the Bald in favour of Pepin II., a son of the late king. Lothaire, who deemed it for his own interest to maintain the struggle, took part with the Aquita-

nians against his brother; and, while holding the latter at bay, passed the Alps, in order to dispute with Louis the portion of the empire ruled by him. Worms speedily fell into the Emperor's hands; but the sudden appearance of Louis at Frankfort, with a large army of Bavarians, Saxons, Thuringians, and Eastern Franks, changed the aspect of affairs, and Lothaire, instead of proceeding to offer them battle, requested an interview with his brother, and, after agreeing to a truce for a few months, turned back to resume the war against Charles. The latter was holding a great council at Bourges, for the general pacification of Aquitaine, when news were brought him of the invasion by Lothaire. The deputies, among whom was Nithard, a grandson of Charlemagne, were unable to prevail on the Emperor to stay his progress; and Charles, consequently, was compelled to retire before him; while Lothaire overran the entire realm, from the banks of the Meuse to the Loire, and from the Loire to the Seine. His entrance into the kingdom was the signal for a general revolt. Aquitaine, Britany, and even Paris rose in arms. The northern Franks alone remained faithful to Charles, and these were utterly incapable of making head against his numerous enemies. He was compelled, therefore, to submit to the usual fate of the vanquished; and his dominions were apportioned among his conquerors—a small section of the large inheritance destined for him by his father being all that was left under his own rule. Charles, however, though humiliated, was not entirely defeated. The wiles of his mother had descended to her son; and while, in the eyes of his brother, he appeared content with what had been assigned to him, he was meditating plans that might at once enable him to avenge the insults heaped upon him, and to recover the provinces and power of which he had been deprived. He contrived to open a correspondence with the leudes of the states which had been ceded to Lothaire, and, after concerting measures with them, he boldly avowed his object, and declared war against his former conquerors. Hostilities immediately afterwards recommenced; but the war, like most of the wars that had occurred under Louis *le Débonnaire*, was merely a succession of marches, counter-marches, skirmishes, and preparations, diversified by the pillage and oppression of the inhabitants of the several districts through which the ill-disciplined hordes of which the opposing armies consisted, were moved by their commanders.

In the midst of this confusion the general assembly of Attigny was held, at which deputies from Louis of Bavaria attended to offer to Charles the alliance of their master. This proffer the prince to whom it was made was in no condition to reject. Terms were therefore agreed upon; and immediately afterwards the Bavarian troops crossed the Rhine, notwithstanding the determined opposition of Adelbert, Duke of Austrasia, and marched at once towards Charles's head-quarters; while the Empress Judith, exerting all her ancient talent and activity, succeeded in attracting to the standard of her son all the Frank chiefs and warriors of Aquitaine. Lothaire, perceiving the gathering storm, was not slow in devising measures to avert the

disasters which threatened him: and in a short time the Imperial troops were in presence of the allied forces of Neustria and Bavaria, determined to abide the issue of a conflict, in a plain between Auxerre and Fontenay, a few leagues from the latter city. Lothaire did not wish however to precipitate matters. He expected aid from the young prince Pepin, who had succeeded in drawing to his standard once more a strong muster of the native Aquitanians, and was marching with all speed to assist his benefactor in humiliating the uncle in whose favour he had been disinherited.

The hostile armies were encamped front to front, awaiting the signal for battle, when Louis and Charles, being now really desirous, as may be inferred from the reasonable terms which they offered, of arranging all differences between themselves and Lothaire without effusion of blood, made a last attempt at negociation. The following is the account of this proceeding given by Nithard, as cited by M. Augustine Thierry:—"Though all hope of justice or of peace seemed removed, yet Lodowig (Louis) and Karle (Charles) sent to inform Lothaire, that certain specified proposals of accommodation were still placed at his option for acceptance; and that they would wait his answer till the twelfth hour of the following day; after which each must abide the judgment of Almighty God. Lothaire, as was his wont, treated the messengers with disdain and insolence; and replied that he would maintain the justice of his cause by the sword.... Lodowig and Karle, as their envoys had promised, waited until the twelfth hour; when a great and fierce conflict commenced, on the banks of a small river.... Lothaire, defeated, turned his back and fled with all his people. The vanquishers resolved to pass the next day, which was Sunday, in that place; and there, after the celebration of mass, they entertained both friends and enemies, traitors as well as faithful followers; and upon all the wounded, in like manner, they bestowed equal care and regard.... Afterwards the kings and the army, grieved that they should have been compelled to use arms against a brother and against christians, questioned the bishops in their suite concerning what they should do because thereof, and all the bishops, having consulted together, declared in presence of the whole assembly, that the war had been undertaken for the sake of justice alone, as had been manifested by the will of God in awarding the victory; and that consequently all who had taken part in the struggle, whether by counsel or in action, were instruments of the will of God, and free from all reproach." A public fast of three days followed, during which the conjoined kings, bishops and people, publicly implored the Almighty to pardon them for the blood they had shed in the conflict, and to grant repose to the souls of their countrymen, who had fallen in such numbers on each side. Upon this Thierry observes, "That religious sanction, that retinue of vanquishers, but above all that alliance formed between two great masses of men, who, by a strange circumstance, were thus reunited for a moment, in order that, for the future, their separation might be the more effectual and complete, evinced the importance of that battle of



Fontenay, of which the treaty of Verdun was the immediate and necessary result."

The battle itself is described by contemporary chroniclers as one of the most sanguinary within memory: though this might well have been without any excessive slaughter; since the recent wars of the Franks had been matters of display rather than of conflict. That it was not insignificant, however, is certain from the effects attributed to it by the nation several years afterwards, when, at the time of the Norman invasion it was said that "the defenders of the soil had been all slaughtered at the great battle of Fontenay." It was fought on the 25th of June, A. D. 841.

Thenceforth, for a few months, the country appears to have enjoyed an interval of repose; but peace could not long endure among a people rent by so many conflicting interests, and depending, in a great measure, for power and wealth upon predatory warfare. Hostilities were, therefore, resumed as soon as the strength of the chiefs was recruited; and the same desultory course of procedure was pursued as had been followed for the last quarter of a century. Charles recommenced military operations in Aquitaine, whence he sought to expel the young Pepin, and the celebrated Bernard, Duke of Septimania, the ancient favourite of Louis the Pious; both of whom were supported in the contest by the countenance if not the assistance of the Emperor Lothaire. The latter, meanwhile, sought to excite discontent

among the subjects of his brother Louis, by conferring on his own Saxon vassals permission to abandon the Christian faith, which had been imposed upon them by Charlemagne and Louis, and to return to their ancient Pagan rites—a privilege which can only be estimated by those upon whom enforced opinions and observances have been inflicted, not so much to ensure their civilisation or advancement, as to afford means of legalised plunder, and to bear testimony of their subjection and humiliation. Louis, who was unwilling to resort to the same measure of conciliation, found it necessary for his own preservation, to endeavour to counteract the sinister designs of his brother, by forming a new alliance with Charles, who had been driven from Aquitaine, and was now drawing nigh to Bavaria, in order to effect the coalition to which he had been invited. A brief campaign ensued, without any material advantage or discomfiture to either party; at the end of which Charles and Louis repaired to Strasbourg [4th February, 842] where they formally renewed their fraternal alliance, by new oaths of amity sworn in the presence of their respective armies.

A graphic description of this scene has been preserved by Nithard. Louis, as the eldest, took priority and pronounced in the Teutonic language of the



race over which he ruled, certain exhortations and observations, which Charles, turning towards his Gallic adherents repeated in the Roman, or bad latin, of the period, which was spoken by his followers. The chief topic

dwelt upon by both was the righteousness of their own conduct, and the perfidy and ambition of their brother Lothaire. Then the King of Bavaria took an oath of union with Charles against the Emperor; not in the native tongue of his subjects, but in that of the Gallo-Franks, who, says a modern author, had most need of having their confidence in the good faith of their new allies strengthened. "For the love of God," he said, "for the sake of all christians, and for our common safety, to the extent of the knowledge and power given me from on high, I will support my brother Karle, here present, by my aid in all things, as it behoves that one brother should sustain another so long as he shall do the same by me; and never will I willingly join myself to Lothaire, or assist him in aught to the injury of my brother." Charles then, speaking to the troops of Louis, repeated the same formula, literally translated into Teutonic. The two monarchs having thus, become mutually bound, imposed upon their respective troops an obligation to the same purport. The Gallo-Franks, in their own language, first took the oath in the following terms:—"If Lodowig shall keep the oath which he has taken to his brother Karle, though Karle, our sovereign, should break it, neither we nor others shall be at liberty to give our aid to any against Lodowig." The Germans repeated the same formula, in their language, changing only the order of the names.

A new agreement for partition of territory was, at the same time, entered into between the princes; by which the whole of Gaul, lying westward of the Escaut, the Meuse, the Saône, and the Rhône, with the north of Spain, as far as the Ebro, were assigned to Charles, surnamed the Bald, by the name of the kingdom of France, by which it was now first called; and all the races subdued by Charlemagne, his predecessors, and successors, who spoke the Teutonic language, were confirmed to Louis. To Lothaire was conceded the realm of Italy, and the Eastern part of Gaul. The terms of this arrangement were tendered to Lothaire for signature, as the means of a permanent pacification; but, as might have been expected, they were rejected with contempt, and preparations were instantly resumed for renewing the war with increased vigour. Louis and Charles at once pushed their troops across the Moselle, and marched upon Aix-la-Chapelle, which Lothaire was compelled to abandon, having scarcely time to carry with him, in his flight, the imperial treasures and ornaments. The bishops, who accompanied the allied armies, and who are said to have been actuated rather by a love of the gold which was lavished upon them, than by any consideration of justice or right, taking courage from the constant good fortune which attended the arms of their patrons, now published a declaration, setting forth, that God himself had chased Lothaire from his realm, and transferred his dominions to his two brothers, and exhorting all good christians to obedience. The confederate princes, knowing the influence of the clergy upon the uninformed and superstitious minds of the people, accepted this spiritual interference with gratitude and without scruple, and took from the bishops, as a gift, what

they had predetermined to appropriate as the reward of conquest. Twelve commissioners were accordingly appointed to settle the division of the spoil; of whose proceedings, however, all that is now known with certainty is, that Lothaire was stripped of his entire inheritance, except Italy; and that seeing, for the present, no hope in continued resistance, he submitted to the necessity of humbling himself before his brothers, and soliciting a new and more equal partition of territory. The deputies of Lothaire had their first audience of the victors at Militiac, whence they followed them to Coblentz; and, finally, a definitive treaty of peace was concluded at Verdun, in June, 843.

This treaty is one of the most celebrated in history. It dissolved at a blow the imperial fabric of Charlemagne; and added another to the long catalogue of experiences, that every hope of consolidating universal dominion is, and must necessarily be chimerical. The nations and languages which it had been the aim of the victorious princes of the house of Pepin to bind into one state, severed at once their forced alliance; and, instead of remaining subjects of the great empire, resumed again their ancient designations of Franks, Italians and Germans, with the peculiar laws and customs formerly appertaining to each, and which had become the more endeared to them, from compulsory abrogation, and the penalties attached to every attempt at reviving them. Henceforth, therefore, the History of France, which, for some time, had comprised the History of Europe, became limited to a single nation and race; at least, inasmuch as the history of any people, acting an important part in the business of the world, and always conspicuous for its exertions in the social progress of mankind, can be said to be so limited.

During the long period of confusion which had preceded the treaty of Verdun, there appears to have been little approximation in France, towards an amalgamation of races, or the use of a common language. The Franks were the dominant body in one section of the country; in another, the Visigoths of Aquitaine still held rule; and in a third the Burgundians; while, in Britany, the ancient Celts still maintained their independence, and defied every effort of those who had overrun and subjugated the rest of the realm, to reduce them to submission. These, with several minor divisions—the remnants of nations which had been broken, dispersed, and nearly exterminated in the barbarian wars of the old time—kept aloof from each other, from various motives of pride, interest, ambition and hate; each perhaps indulging a latent hope, that where everything seemed dependent upon violence and guile, a chance might offer for the assertion of its own superiority. There was thus no motive for union among the various provinces, nor indeed of neighbour with neighbour; but every little community remained isolated; and sought, though without making the least effort to concert means for the accomplishment of a great and general end, to retain its cherished customs and language till the desired opportunity should arise for re-asserting its independent nationality. Hence the country which fell to the share of Charles, was rather an assemblage of distinct clans, each

governed by its own chief, than a consolidated kingdom ruled by a sovereign, with the sanction and assistance of a national council. The feudal system was a necessary consequence of this state of things, and the date of this system as an establishment, though its rise may be traced to a considerably earlier period, may fairly be assigned to the formal partition of the empire of Charlemagne.

The progress of the country under Charles, who was by no means an illiterate or unwise prince, might have been favourable and rapid, had circumstances permitted him to give fair play to his talents or desires. He was a patron of learning and of learned men; he promoted such of the clergy as most distinguished themselves by their piety and erudition; he afforded protection and encouragement to the professors of science and the arts; and he sought to extend the advantages of commerce among his subjects; but sufficient repose to carry forward, to any great extent, the work of civilisation among so rude a people as those whose prejudices he had to contend against was not left to him during the whole of his troubled reign. Almost as soon as he had established himself securely on his throne, he was called upon to repel the incursions of the barbarous Danes and Northmen, who, for nearly a century, had been in the habit of making annual piratical descents upon the Frank coast, increasing from year to year the magnitude of their expeditions, and penetrating farther and farther towards the South, and into the interior of the country, in all their successive forays for plunder. The might and genius of Pepin and of Charlemagne had overawed and restrained them for a while; and even under Louis le Débonnaire, who retained at least the shadow of his father's power, they had slackened sail in the imperial harbours, and at the mouths of the most accessible rivers, contenting themselves with what they could lay hands upon on the instant; and directing their prow to other shores, the moment they felt that an alarm was taken at their presence. But during the petty wars and general disorder which followed, they had become emboldened by success, and gradually ventured to infest every haven and river into which their daring keels could be thrust. From one end of the kingdom to the other all the maritime provinces were then overrun and ravaged. The banks of the Scheldt, the Somme, the Seine, the Loire, the Garonne and the Rhône, were successively devastated; and even the cities of Rouen, of Orléans, and of Paris, were pillaged and laid waste. Disaffection was not wanting among the subjects of Charles himself to serve the cause of the invaders. Lantbert, whom the king had deprived of his paternal inheritance, as a punishment for the opposition of his father, introduced the rovers into the Loire in 843, where they plundered and burned the city of Nantes, "two years after the capture and sack of Rouen by Oscheri." To Aquitaine they were invited by Pepin II., the grandson of Louis the Pious, who sought, by their aid, to recover the realm of his father, of which he had been deprived by the treaty of Verdun, and who could no longer rely upon effective aid from his dispirited uncle Lothaire. Thus the

horrors of civil war were added to those arising from the irrepressible outrages of foreign enemies; and Charles was not only prevented from proceeding with any design for the benefit of his people; but was furnished with constant occupation in a way which could not fail to throw them farther backward into barbarism.

The alliance of Pepin with the Scandinavians—whom we may distinguish henceforward by the name which has become attached to them in History, as Normans, consisting as they did of Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, and other northern tribes—was a peculiarly unfortunate circumstance for France, as it afforded the freebooters an opportunity of gaining an intimate knowledge of the country and its resources, and afforded them facilities for establishing an intercourse with such of the native chiefs, as might, at any time, desire their aid against their legal suzerain. Pepin himself, however, though supported by all the power of the Aquitanians, and possessing their entire sympathy and confidence, was compelled to succumb to the overwhelming force brought against him by Charles; and after yet another attempt, which presented the strange spectacle of a mingled horde of Visigoths, Saracens (of Spain), and Normans, fighting side by side under the same banners against the Gallo-Franks, he was compelled to surrender all claims to his birthright, and to retire to the convent of Senlis, where in a short time he died. Bernard, Duke of Septimania, the ancient lover, according to popular scandal, of the Empress Judith, Charles's mother, and who had been previously an ally of the young Pepin, was the next who sought to avail himself of the aid of the pirates to procure an independent territory for himself. The Aquitanians, deprived of him whom they considered as their legitimate sovereign, readily flocked to the standard of the pretender; and for awhile succeeded in defying all attempts of Charles to reduce them. But what the latter failed to accomplish by force he readily succeeded in effecting by fraud. After making preparations for conducting an immense army into Aquitaine, he made proposals, of such moderation, to Bernard, that the Duke at once accepted them, and without hesitation attended the bidding of the king, in order to be personally reconciled, and to do homage for his estates, to his now acknowledged sovereign. Suspecting no treachery, he presented himself at the Monastery of Saint Cernin, and while in the act of taking the required oath of fealty, he was stabbed to the heart with a dagger, aimed by the right hand of Charles himself, who, as his victim fell at his feet, in the agonies of death, is said to have exclaimed, "Woe to thee, traitor, who sullied the bed of my father and my mother!" According to contemporary opinion, founded upon no slight basis, and sanctioned by the voice of tradition, descending unchanged, to the present day, Charles, in thus avenging himself upon a traitor, became amenable to the infamous accusation of parricide, and if the words imputed to him were really uttered, it cannot be urged in extenuation of his crime, that the royal assassin was ignorant of his probable relationship to the murdered Duke.

In giving credit to the king for his acknowledged merits, as a patron of literature and science, no mention has yet been made of his qualifications as a general, or as chief of a nation of warriors. This consideration, however, with reference to the condition and prospects of France, is too important to be omitted; and all evidence collected in every age conspires to stamp him as a coward. He was crafty, shrewd, and an adept in all the resources of cunning in council; but in the field, according to the '*Annales Fuldenses*,' "he was more timid than a hare." Where his subtile expedients failed, he at once had recourse to gold; forgetful that, by gratifying, he rather stimulated, than satiated, the cravings of avarice. To the sword he never appealed till reduced to the last extremity; and then rather on the compulsion of those by whom he was surrounded, than of his own accord—a circumstance sufficient, perhaps, of itself, to account for the rapid strides towards dominion which the Normans made during his sovereignty. He permitted these marauders to advance unmolested to the very gates of Paris; and then, instead of attacking them with the army which he had collected on the plains of St. Denis, as he might undoubtedly have done with advantage, while at a distance from their vessels, he caused an offer to be made to Ragenaire, or Regnier, their leader, of seven thousand pounds weight of silver, on condition that they should immediately retire from his kingdom, and swear never to return. The bribe was, of course, accepted, and the oath taken without scruple; and Regnier descended the Loire, and returned to the Northern Court from which he had been sent, to incite others to similar adventures. The effect of displaying the wealth he had acquired in the eyes of his astonished countrymen, need not be dwelt upon. Where one had volunteered in previous expeditions, a hundred then offered their services, and the whole value of France would have been too small to satisfy the swarms thus tempted from time to time to forsake their sterile homes, and to try their fortune in the golden south. Such, indeed, was the lack of courage in Charles, and the baneful influence of his conduct upon his subjects, that the Northmen, speaking in their own land of the resistance they encountered, were wont to say that the dead offered more opposition than the living, and that the whole race of the Franks were women and cravens.

So great was the host and the confidence of the Normans, who flocked into the kingdom in the year 846, that, instead of marching as had been their custom, in a compact and united body to the place on which they meditated an attack, they divided into several bands, and simultaneously assaulted villages, towns and cities, widely remote from each other; and extended their ravages and wanton outrages over the entire face of the country. Nor were the Normans, terrible as they were, the sole enemies whom the people, at this time, had to fear. The Saracens, released from the terror of the name of Charlemagne, infested the coast of Provence with bands of pirates, and made occasional incursions beyond the limits of the Ebro, in order to forestall the ruder barbarians of the North, in collecting such pillage

as was worth carrying away. The hardy Bretons, too, always ready to take advantage of the disasters of their hated neighbours, in order to add to their disquiet, made continual descents upon their territory; and seldom returned to their mountain fastnesses without having glutted themselves with vengeance, and loaded their captives with booty.

Charles was thus engaged in constant marches and countermarches, the rapidity of which, had they been followed by a corresponding vigour of action, might have produced a restoration of peace and order; but a battle was seldom resorted to. Where the opposing force was strong, money was paid for a temporary cessation of hostilities; and where it was weak, it was allowed to slip away unharmed, during the procrastination of negotiations, that ought never to have been thought of, or the almost equally prolonged preparations for a conflict. On one occasion the king himself, in the course of an ill-concerted movement, narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy. While traversing a morass between Maine and Britany, he was suddenly attacked by a party of foragers, and had to rely for safety upon the strength and speed of his horse. So doubtful was the issue, indeed, that for a time it was rumoured and believed that he had been slain or captured. So timid was Charles, it may be added, that no enemy, however insignificant, stood in awe of his prowess; and so remorseless and treacherous was he that no friend, however bound to him by gratitude, revered him. What hope could there be for a people, whose trust was essentially in princes and chiefs, when thus abandoned to enemies of every rank, creed, and nation, actuated by such diversified motives for adding extra oppression to the ordinary cruelty of unchecked spoliation?

It was during a brief cessation from this wearying turmoil, that Charles, in the year 847, called a general council at Mersen, where in concert with his brother Lothaire, he framed a number of regulations for the establishment and guidance of a body of national police, on the plan of that created, under similar circumstances, in England, by King Alfred; by which every man was held, in some measure, responsible for the good conduct and fidelity of his neighbour—a judicious measure, without doubt, could it have been carried into execution, but requiring a much firmer and more popular monarch at the head of affairs to render it effective. As it was, the Normans laughed it to scorn, as another of the many futile precautions of the French King to mislead his subjects, rather than to baffle his foes; and scarcely had the council separated ere they presented themselves, with their accustomed audacity, at the gates of Bordeaux, and demanded a large sum for the ransom of the city. The Jews, who were already established there as merchants and money changers, in considerable numbers, are accused with the betrayal of the place, after the demands of the barbarians had been refused by the citizens—being impelled thereto, it is added, by their hatred of the christians; who, we may readily believe, indeed, had, by their intolerable extortion and grinding cruelty, given them sufficient cause for desiring vengeance. But,

be this as it may, the gates of the city were one night opened to the besiegers, and the place after being sacked, and subjected to lawless rapine, was delivered to the flames.

Charles, meanwhile, having appeased his insulted majesty with the attack and capture of nine deserted Norman barques, which lay at anchor in the Dordogne, passed thence on the road towards Britany, where his presence was likely to be least looked for, and where he consequently hoped to obtain an easy victory; and thus at once to satisfy his outraged honour, and to silence the growing murmurs of his followers and people. The wary and vigilant Bretons, however, were not to be overcome by so ill-judged an attempt at surprise. Their attention had been thoroughly aroused by the daily occurring events upon their frontier; and they were constantly on their guard, to take advantage of favourable circumstances, either to follow the example of the Normans, or to repel attempted incursions upon their own territory. At the call of Nomenoé, their chief, they thronged, like clustering bees, about his standard; and without awaiting to be attacked amid their own almost impracticable dales and mountains, descended at once to the more eligible country of Anjou. Here mounted on the small, sure-footed, and hardy horses of their native wilds, they were enabled to wheel and hover around the close phalanges of their enemies, to harass them in front, in rear, and on the flanks, with incessant discharges of arrows and light lances, and to separate, rejoin, advance and retire, at pleasure, without presenting an assailable point in return: and when pursued, to any distance, by a number of the adversary, they invariably found refuge in the intricate woods and morasses in the neighbourhood, whither the Franks, mounted on heavier horses, and encumbered with metal armour, dared not to follow them. In this species of warfare, Charles was doomed to see his noble army hourly crumbling away, without a hope of being able to retrieve his circumstances, by any decisive action. He reflected for a while, and then, having adopted his resolution, he quitted his camp by night, with a few chosen followers, and fled towards the less inhospitable regions of his kingdom, leaving his troops to be destroyed at once or in detail by the triumphant Bretons. The news of the king's ignominious desertion was speedily spread, and Nomenoé hesitated no longer to give battle to the foe. An engagement—which, from the defenceless condition of the Franks, who were nearly all wounded or suffering from sickness, and whose cavalry was almost entirely dismounted, scarcely deserves a better name than that of a massacre—took place in the plain of Ballon, on the banks of the Villaine, at a few leagues from Redon, in which the army of Charles was utterly broken and destroyed; and the Bretons, pursuing their advantage, pushed forward with fire, sword and rapine, through Maine and Anjou, and advanced even to Mayence, where they are said to have received a large sum as the price of their forbearance towards the inhabitants. The success of Nomenoé in these conflicts seems to have filled him with pride and arrogance. Having defeated the French

King; he was no longer content with the title which had satisfied the preceding chiefs of Britany, but caused himself to be crowned king, in the church of the monastery of Dol, where, imitating the style and pageantry of his foe, he received regal homage from his followers.

Nor was this all that the hardy Breton dared adventure, or succeeded in accomplishing. While Charles submitted with the most abject servility to the dictates of the Pope and his agents, Nomenoë opposed and defeated both. The creed of his subjects was a strange admixture of Christianity and Paganism—of the rites established by the Church of Rome, and those which had subsisted from the ancient Druidical times. The bishops who had been sent into his realm sought to rectify these heresies, or to extort large sums of money by way of atonement, for permitting their retention; and when Nomenoë interfered to protect his people, he was at once excommunicated. Instead of being alarmed by the thunders of the Vatican, he retorted, by deposing the bishops who were sufficiently audacious to publish the bull fulminated against him, and by filling their sees with creatures of his own, who refused obedience to the Papal will. Charles on the contrary, though he had more than once adventured to enforce compulsory loans from his clergy, when required to bribe the national enemies, paid the most ready and implicit obedience to the Pope in all matters of doctrine; and permitted the bishops to govern the church with a despotism which had been previously unknown among his ecclesiastical subjects. Hence fierce and long controversies and persecutions arose, the violence and distraction of which were scarcely less effective in the promotion of anarchy than were the incessant invasions and ravages of the Norman freebooters.

In order to render the nature of these bitter clerical quarrels intelligible, it will be sufficient to cite a single instance, the most important, according to Mosheim, that arose during that age. A young Saxon, of illustrious birth, named Godescale, having been consecrated by his parents, from infancy, to the service of God, according to the notions of the period, was placed in the monastery of Fulda, to receive an education proper for the life he was destined to lead. As the young monk, however, grew up, he became weary of his trammels, and desirous of returning to society; but he was prevented by the decision of his superior, Rabanus Maurus, who declared that no power on earth could release him from the vows and dedication of his parents. A furious animosity was thus engendered in the breast of Godescale, who sought every occasion of opposing the views and tenets of Rabanus; and from this personal hostility is said to have arisen the great questions concerning *Predestination*, *Divine Grace*, and *Trinal Unity*, with which the name of the Saxon is inseparably connected, and which continued for centuries to agitate Christendom; if indeed they are wholly settled at the present day. At the age of maturity, the involuntary monk removed from Fulda to the convent of Orbai, near Soissons, where he prosecuted his theological studies with an insatiable desire of sounding the deepest mysteries of learning, and

of being "wise even above what is written." From Orbai, Godescale is represented as having gone to Rome, on returning from which city, in 847, he took up his abode for some time with Count Eberald, one of the most distinguished of the nobles forming the more than commonly polished Court of the Emperor Lothaire. Here it was that he first attracted general notice by broaching his heresy, in the presence of Nothingus, bishop of Verona; maintaining that the Almighty had, from all eternity, pre-ordained some of his creatures to everlasting life, and others to everlasting punishment and torture, and that consequently Christ had not died for all mankind. Rabanus, his ancient enemy, having heard of these things, took every opportunity of representing Godescale, as a corrupter of the true religion, and a propounder of monstrous and pernicious errors. He wrote to that effect to Count Eberald and the Bishop of Verona, and challenged his opponent to defend himself from an accusation of schism, before a Council called to decide on his opinions at Mayence, of which city Rabanus himself was now archbishop. Godescale did not hesitate to accept the invitation; but, as might have been expected, his tenets were condemned and stigmatised by the impartial judges whom his foe had summoned to pronounce upon them. Refusing to recant, he was sent prisoner [A. D. 848] to Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, in whose diocese he had received the order of priesthood. Hincmar, one of the most imperious prelates of the age, devoted to the interests of Rabanus, called a council at Kiersy, where Godescale was again accused and convicted of heresy; and because he firmly maintained the doctrines he had taught, and which he truly affirmed to be the same as had been preached by St. Augustine, he was not only degraded from the priesthood, but sentenced to be publicly whipped, "with such severity, that the pain he endured at last overcame his constancy, and he was induced to consent to the humiliation of casting with his own hands into the flames, the writings which he had prepared and read before his inexorable judges, in justification of the opinions for which he was condemned." To finish the persecution he was sent to be imprisoned for life in the monastery of Hautvilliers; where after having contrived to write and procure to be made public a long dissertation maintaining that "God was three, and at the same time but one," a form of words of which Hincmar vainly endeavoured afterwards to proscribe the use—he died in the year 868-9, maintaining to the last, the truth of the doctrines for the assertion of which his many miseries had been inflicted.

Had these controversies been confined to the priesthood, they would have been comparatively harmless; but they were the occasion of agitation, virulence and disorder among all ranks and classes of the people; and the king, instead of putting an end to them, as matters which needlessly divided the attention and weakened the energies of his subjects, when the whole mind and strength of the nation should have been concentrated on the subject of its defence, took part in the disgraceful squabbles, and abetted Hincmar and Rabanus in all the spiritual and temporal tyranny which they from time to

time found it necessary to exercise, in order to get rid of opposition and of opponents.

The consequences were most disastrous to France. The Normans finding the chiefs and people embroiled among themselves, became more daring and determined than ever ; and not satisfied with mere plundering excursions into the country near the coast, they began to settle among the inhabitants, building for themselves cabins and huts in the vicinity of their anchorage, or amid the more fertile plains and vallies of the interior, and establishing themselves, in many parts, as permanent colonists. Their fleets of rude, but skilfully managed vessels, it is said, continued to arrive from, and return to the North, year by year, as had been their custom ; but their camp remained now behind, as a receptacle for the booty acquired during the intervals. At the mouth of the Loire they occupied the isle of Noirmoutiers, and, in the Seine, first the circle of Ghiwald at Vernon, and subsequently the island of Oissel, a few leagues above Rouen ; whence, as from a fortress, they were enabled to scour the country in every direction, in bands of thirty, forty or a



hundred, and to return to their den in safety with their booty ; where they defied all attempts to pursue or dislodge them. Sometimes, when they ventured farther than usual from their refuge, they collected such horses as they found in their way, and thus formed bands of cavalry strong enough to attack the enfeebled and depopulated towns and villages of the provinces, as well as the churches and monasteries which were their more general and easy objects of sack and pillage.

In 852 two formidable hosts simultaneously ascended the Seine and the Loire. Nantes, Angers, Tours, and Mans were plundered and burned. Au

overflow of the river alone saved the monastery of St. Martin (Marmoutiers), the favourite saint of the old Merovingian dynasty, from the same fate. The Normans had heard of the rich offerings, the jewels, and gold, and costly ornaments lavished upon the shrine of the patron of Clovis; and their rapacity was tempted by the prospect of a richer prize than any they had yet obtained; but being delayed for awhile by the waters, they found, on reaching the place, that the monks had fled in consternation to Orléans, taking with them the precious relics of their guardian, and all the wealth which those relics had procured them. The Pagan invaders pursued the fugitives, who fearing that Orléans would be insecure against such desperate foes, retreated thence to Auxerre, where, a strong body of troops being posted, they resolved to await the issue. The roads in this journey are described to have been thronged and choked with the flying people, headed by monks bearing their relics in procession, and singing the penitential psalms and hymns of the Church.

It was about this period that a large number of the native chiefs and warriors, finding no safety in the open country, betook themselves to the forests, to the tops of mountains, and the crags of rocks, and began to construct for themselves fortresses, in which they might rely on that security which neither their own power, nor that of the crown, was able to afford them in more accessible quarters; and, as the less wealthy proprietors of land, with the free peasantry and the serfs, were glad to seek shelter near them, feudal society sprang up, took root, strengthened and extended itself with a rapidity which, without bestowing due consideration on the circumstances of the times, might well appear to be inconceivable, if not incredible. Its growth was rather promoted than otherwise, indeed, by the means which were shortly afterwards used for its suppression. Poltroon as he was in every act of his government, as regarded foreigners, Charles the Bald was sufficiently far-seeing to perceive wherein his kingly prerogatives were placed in jeopardy by his subjects; and though he could offer no resource to the oppressed from the oppressor, he saw that the multiplying of castles, and of independent communities, relying upon other chiefs than those of whom he should have the appointment and controul, would strip him of substantial power, as well as of respect and influence. In 864 therefore he published a capitulary, ordaining the demolition of all castles, and strongholds throughout the realm, save only such as had been constructed with his express sanction, or that of his royal or imperial predecessors. The mandate was as powerless as its author. Fear had presided at the foundation of the obnoxious fortresses; and fear still kept watch on their battlements—a fear of domestic tyranny and rapacity, as much as of the Normans, against whom the impassable barriers had been raised. As a species of safety had thus been devised, without the king's aid, it was retained, in despite of his threats and denunciations; and leagues were formed among chiefs and people, far and near, for mutual defence and assistance against all interference with what was justly considered the right

of self-protection. Thus the imbecility of Charles inflicted a lasting scourge upon Europe, through which the feudal system spread from France, and continued, long after the necessities which had called it into existence had passed away, to press heavily upon the destinies of mankind, and to perpetuate a bondage of the most galling character upon all, save the aristocratic ranks of the people—a bondage which has not even yet been wholly abrogated, and which, in scarcely any instance, has been utterly destroyed without revolution and bloodshed.

It would be unjust towards the memory of the intrepid Nomenoé of Britany to omit all further notice of his fate and fortunes. He retained his power, against all the efforts of Charles and of the Pope, till his death, which happened in 851; and he was succeeded in his throne by his son Hérispoé, who, however, wanting the talent or the ambition of his father, consented, after a brief contest for independence, to do homage for, at least, the territories conquered by his predecessor, including Rennes, Nantes and the country of Raiz; and sunk into the condition of one of Charles's vassals.

In 855, the year in which the Emperor Lothaire died, Charles seems, for a moment, to have been inspired with unwonted courage. Bicorn, one of the most celebrated of the Northern *sea-kings*, having made a descent upon the coast of Normandy, was attacked by the king in the forest of Perche, and driven in confusion and dismay back to his vessels. This, however, was both the first and the last exploit of the same kind in which Charles was destined to figure. In the following year, the Normans pillaged Orléans, almost without encountering a pretence of opposition; and, in 857, they sacked Chartres, the bishop of which was drowned in seeking to escape by swimming across the Eure. Here all the well-stocked storehouses of the city were plundered, and the inhabitants were subjected to ravage and violence. The islands of the Seine, according to Hildger, bishop of Meaux, were at this time covered with the white bones of the captives taken in these daring expeditions, whose hard fate it was to perish in the hands of their ruthless captors.

A large band of the pirates commanded by Weeland, subsequently crossed the Somme, the marshy bed of which had resisted all their former attempts to force a passage, and pillaged St. Valery, Amiens, and the rich monastery of St. Ricquier. Charles, reduced to the extremity of despair, now adopted a singular resolution, which, while it confirms the universal opinion of his cowardice, exhibits his fertility of resources, had his mind and heart been properly nerved and directed. Instead of venturing to oppose the numerous foes who were ravaging his dominions, he made an offer to the Normans of the Somme of three thousand pounds weight of silver, on condition that they should expel from their settlements the Normans of the Seine. Weeland consented to the proposal, but refused to act until the money had been paid; and the collection of the bribe, though enforced from all classes with the utmost rigour, occupied a whole year—an evidence at once of the extreme poverty and depopulation of the country. In the end, the pirate-chief,

having received his price, blockaded the isle of Oisel with two hundred and sixty vessels [861]; but on learning that the besieged, who were reduced by famine, had in their stronghold the booty of five successive years, the vanquishers made common cause with the vanquished, and refused to drive away them and their wealth—pretending that the season was too far advanced to compel them to put to sea, and demanding for both themselves and their new allies winter quarters in the neighbourhood. They accordingly fixed themselves till the ensuing spring on the banks of the Seine, between Paris and Melun, and as soon as they were able to move at pleasure, the whole band, instead of departing as they had promised, advanced into the district of Marne, where they recommenced their accustomed warfare against the inhabitants. This proceeding was totally beyond endurance. The whole nation rose in arms against the faithless pagans, and, after a council held at Senlis, the two banks of the Marne were occupied by troops, who, having awaited the return of the Normans from the sack of Meaux, fell upon them with the fury of personal hate and vengeance, and defeating them, compelled them without delay to betake themselves to their ships, and set sail from the coast. Weeland himself, it is affirmed, consented to be baptised, and remained behind in the court of the king—a position where he might have been of infinite service to the sovereign, or to his countrymen, as his inclination prompted, or opportunities occurred.

A single defeat however did not deter the Normans from renewing their incursions. Not long after the expulsion of the band of Weeland, the freebooters again entered the Seine, and endeavoured to recover the old camp of their countrymen, near Rouen, where Robert the Strong, the celebrated Count of Anjou, vainly strove to make head against them—assisted as they were by the Bretons, whose new chief, Salomon, was anxious once more to free his territory from subjection to the French king. In the spring of 866, Robert was defeated in an engagement near Melun, and Charles thereupon consented to sign a treaty—the most disgraceful to which even he had yet assented—to pay to the victors, not only the amount of four thousand pounds weight of silver, but to restore to them all such French captives as should have escaped from bondage, or to redeem them at such price as their masters should fix; and to pay, in addition, a *wéregild* for every Norman whom the French should have slain in battle during the recent encounters. No other nation, perhaps, ever submitted to a similar humiliation; and that France need not have sustained it, under a leader of ordinary skill and courage, may be inferred from the partial successes of the chiefs who occasionally ventured to offer resistance to the oppressors. In many instances Count Robert the Strong was completely successful in resisting, and even in humbling the enemy, and had he been properly supported, he might have achieved a perfect and permanent triumph. He was left, however, to wear out his life in desultory struggles, and to meet death itself in the manner of a predatory chieftain in a feudal war, rather than as a patriotic general engaged in a national contest. The story of his end is thus related:—

In the same year in which Charles bribed the forbearance of the Normans, four hundred of that wild race, headed by a warrior named Hastings, having attacked and plundered Mans, were waylaid on their return, by Robert and three other counts, who surprised them in the village of Brisserte, on the banks of the Sarthe in Anjou, where with his few devoted followers he held them engaged for the greater part of a day. Towards evening the counts withdrew from the engagement, and Robert sought repose in his tent from the intense heat and the fatigue he had undergone. Here he necessarily laid aside his heavy helmet and cuirasse; but scarcely had he done so, ere loud outcries were heard among his followers. Hastings, finding himself enclosed like a wild boar in his lair, saw no hope of escape, except in a desperate venture. He accordingly made an effort to force a passage through the opposing force. Robert, without waiting to resume his armour, hastened to the scene of strife, and there, before the church, in which the Normans had found refuge, received a mortal wound. He fell and expired upon the threshold of the sacred edifice. The *Annales Fuldenses* distinguish this brave noble as the Macchabeus of his age. His children, Eudes and Robert, though destined to play no unimportant part in the future history of their country, were not yet of sufficient age to fill the post which their father's death had left vacant. Hugues, or Hugh, his cousin, succeeded him therefore as governor of Anjou, and France was left again to all the distractions by which she had formerly been rent, and from which the talents and heroism of Robert had been, to some extent, successful in freeing her.

In his family relations Charles was not more fortunate than in the affairs of his kingdom. He was intimately concerned in all the numerous quarrels which occurred among his brothers and their children, concerning the partition of the heritage of their respective parents, and in his own children he was unblest. Of his four sons, two had died young, having more than once, it is said, evinced the spirit of filial disobedience and obstinacy which seemed to have become a characteristic of the Carlovingian race. The youngest, having, against his inclination, been devoted to a religious life, sought, on arriving at maturity, to free himself from his compulsory vows by flight; and was sentenced for the offence, by a national ecclesiastical council, to the loss of his eyes. The young monk appealed against this barbarous decision to Pope Adrian II., who revoked the sentence; but in such arrogant and offensive terms towards the French king and clergy, that Charles, weak and spiritless as he was, resented the insult, and supported his bishops, though against his own child. The punishment which had been decreed was accordingly inflicted, and Carloman died, as he was doomed to live, in obscurity.

At the death of the Emperor Lothaire, in 855, the crown of Italy had passed without question to the brows of Prince Louis, his eldest son; and Charles, his third son, was permitted, unmolested, to ascend the throne of Provence, which had been bequeathed to him by his father. Charles the



Death of Robert the Strong.

Bald was at that period too exclusively occupied by his endeavours to retain his own seat, to have leisure to interfere with States which did not immediately concern him; but the moment he could find an opportunity for intrigue—namely, on the death of Charles, in 863,—it was exerted, in order to withdraw allegiance from his remaining nephews, and to annex the rich plains of Provence to his impoverished and miserable kingdom. Fortunately, however, his designs were revealed before they were ripe for execution, and those whom he sought to betray and overwhelm were enabled by their vigilance to frustrate his intentions. At a somewhat later period his baneful interposition was felt by young Lothaire of Lorraine, who, having a long suit in the Papal court, concerning his questionable marriage with Valdrade, was, at the desire of his uncle, excommunicated, and driven from the sovereignty which his father had conferred on him. But the crowning of all his wishes and hopes, was reserved for the death of his imperial nephew, Louis II., without issue, which event occurred in 875. He then, disregarding the prior and better founded claim of his elder brother and ancient protector, Louis of Germany, hastened across the Alps, and, aided by the friendly letters of bishop Hincmar, and by heavy bribes, distributed among his nephew's chief feudatories, prevailed on Pope John VIII. to place on his head the Imperial crown, and the iron crown of Lombardy—empty honours both, in his case, but not the less objects of his ambition, and conducive to his childish gratification. From this proud moment he laid aside the Frankish arms and armour, which he had previously worn, in deference to the opinions of his Gallic subjects, and assumed the long and flowing dalmatic, with a train which swept the earth, and the effeminate head-dress and silken veil, surmounted by a jewelled diadem, which was the usual costume of the degenerate Emperors of Constantinople: and, thus disguised, he returned, with all the pomp of a Persian conqueror, to his native dominions, where he called a national assembly at Ponthieu; not that he had any important business to transact, but in order to parade his new finery, and to draw pleasure from hearing the repetition of his new titles and dignities.

His brother Louis, enfeebled by age and sickness, made no attempt to assert his right to the imperial sceptre; but remained quietly at Aix-la-Chapelle, endeavouring to consolidate his kingdom, the best governed, and most peaceable of all the realms which had fallen to the descendants of Charlemagne. He died, however, in 876, having divided his kingdom among his three sons, Louis of Saxony, Carloman of Bavaria, and Charles *le Gros*, (the Fat); when Charles, more anxious to deprive his nephews of their inheritance, than to free France from the presence of the Normans, who after having left to the country an interval of tranquillity, had reappeared with a hundred vessels on the coast, at once proclaimed his intention to invade Germany, "with such a cloud of horses and warriors, that the Rhine, exhausted in the passage of his army, should allow him to cross it dry shod." He was signally frustrated, nevertheless, when he attempted to put his vaunt

in execution. His followers were neither so numerous as he appears to have expected, nor at all well disposed towards his project; and at the first encounter with his nephews on the plains of Andernach, his troops were totally defeated, with the loss of the major part of their leaders. He, having, as was his wont, fled at the sign of danger, was, for some time, believed to have been taken prisoner; and his wife, the Empress Richilde, compelled to quit Héristal at three in the morning, to avoid falling into the hands of the active and enraged pursuers of her husband, gave birth on the road to a son, whom one of her attendants took up and carried with him on his horse to the neighbourhood of Rheims, before a place of security could be found for either child or mother.

No repose was thenceforth allowed to Charles. On the Rhine he was continually menaced by the young Saxon King, Louis; in Italy he was disturbed and harassed by Carloman, and his eastern shores were infested by the most daring Norman band which had yet invaded France, led by Raoul, or Rollo, who devastated with impunity the whole country along the banks of the Seine. With this last enemy he had recourse as usual to gold, as a means of procuring a temporary respite; and having thus gained breathing time, he called a general assembly at Kiersy; and, in order to conciliate his discontented and refractory nobles, proclaimed the celebrated capitulary, by which all the fiefs, and military tenures of the realm were declared hereditary, and the feudal system itself legally consolidated. He then marched with a large army across the Alps, whither, however, his nephew Carloman had arrived before him, with an equal force, and was waiting to give him battle. "According to his custom," it is said in the *Recueil des Hist. de Gaules*, "he no sooner heard of the approach of the Bavarians, than he instantly turned himself to flee; for, at all seasons of his life, whenever it was necessary for him to face his enemies, he either openly retreated from before them, or secretly withdrew from his soldiers, and departed alone." He was unable, notwithstanding, this time to escape. Among the mountain passes at the foot of Mont Cenis, he was seized with a fever, of which, after lingering for eleven days, he died in the miserable hut of a peasant, at a place called Brios, on the 6th of October, 877. His Jewish physician, Sédécias (Zedekias), according to the ancient chroniclers, had put a powder of poison into his patient's drink to accelerate his end; but the mere fact of his having been attended by one of the despised race of Judah, was of itself sufficient to originate such a charge among the Christian historians of the ninth, and many subsequent centuries—without, as appears to be the case in this instance, any better foundation than the hatred of the reporters. Charles, when he died, was fifty-four years old, and had reigned—if so it might be called—somewhat more than thirty-seven years. Even in death misfortune seems faithfully to have adhered to him, and to have excluded his corpse from the sepulchre he had chosen for it. He, in life, had desired to be entombed in the monastery of St. Denis, and thither accordingly he would have been

conveyed, but for the rapid decomposition of his remains—cited as another strong proof of his having been poisoned—which rendered it necessary that he should be interred at Nantua. Of his character as a man and a sovereign not a word need be added. It is stamped in every line of the history of his ignominious reign and life.



Louis II. *le Begue* (the Stammerer) the only surviving son of Charles the Bald, succeeded his father as king of the French only, the titles of Emperor and King of Italy passing to Louis the Saxon, the eldest son of Louis *le Germanique*. The new monarch of France was a prince of delicate health, and, as is generally believed, though no distinct evidence of the fact appears, of weak intellect. Such a person was necessarily unfit to cope with the difficulties by which his throne and kingdom were surrounded. He had not only the same enemies to contend with as his father, but additional ones, in Boson, Duke of Provence, father-in-law of his cousin Carloman, who sought to render his fief independent of the crown, in Hugues, the abbot (of Anjou) who had succeeded to the offices of Robert the Strong, and in his own mother-in-law, the Empress Richilde, who appears to have cherished all a foster-mother's hatred towards the son of her deceased husband. Over this last foe, however, Louis, at least for a time, triumphed by his liberality. On the receipt of some large presents of money and jewels, she delivered to his

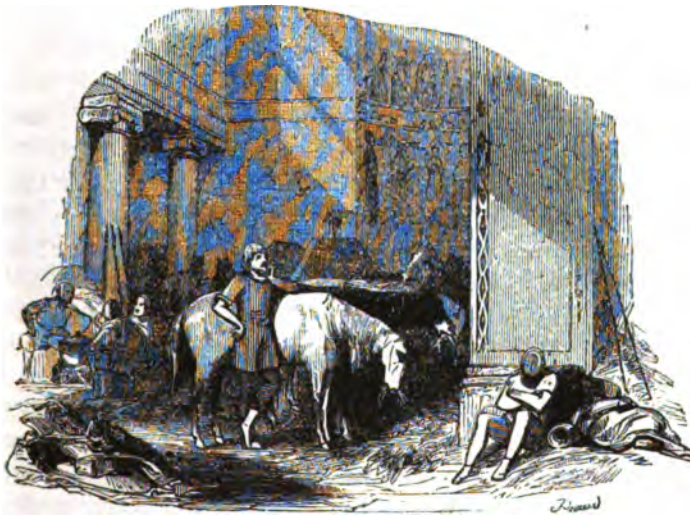
messengers the crown, sceptre and regal mantle which had been consigned to her keeping; and, following her example, the great vassals of the kingdom, assembled at Chêne, a royal *villa* in the forest of Compiègne, "consented"—a phrase as significant as a volume to prove the little real authority of the king—to do homage to their new monarch for their lands and offices. The rule of Louis—such as it was—extended nominally over Neustria, Aquitaine, and Provence; Britany, Burgundy and Austrasia forming distinct sovereign states. Many of the minor feudatories, it may be added, were in fact little less than independent Palatinates.

The Normans, soon after the death of Charles, had recommenced their ravages, which, from the slight notice taken of them by contemporary annalists, appear to have ceased for awhile after the retreat of Rollo; and the mouths of the Loire and the Seine, by the time that his title had been acknowledged, were again choked with hostile vessels. The Aquitanian chiefs, never thoroughly reconciled to the yoke of the Franks, seized the opportunity to unite, under Bernard Duke of Septimania, in revolt; and Boson Duke of Provence and Hugh, the abbot, also set up their several standards in opposition to the crown. Louis, bewildered with his many cares, seems to have lost heart and hope, and while marching towards Aquitaine, with the intention of repressing or effecting a reconciliation with his refractory vassals, was seized with a mortal sickness, of which he expired on Good Friday, in the year 879, after a troubled reign of eighteen months.

The *Stammerer* left two sons, Louis and Carloman; the elder of whom was scarcely sixteen when his father died. Boson and Hugh were immediately placed by their followers at the head of the government; and, having called an assembly of the counts and superior ecclesiastics of the kingdom, they caused Louis III. and Carloman to be recognised as joint kings. On this occasion, however, the monarchs were doomed to opposition from their subjects from the moment of their accession: Gozlin, abbot of St. Denis and St. Germain-des-Prés, though he had been held in high favour by Charles the Bald, entered into a conspiracy with Conrad Count of Paris and other nobles, and calling an assembly at Creil-sur-Oise, situate at the mouth of the Terin, caused an offer of the crown to be made to Louis of Germany. This attempt to change the line of succession was, however, unsuccessful, and Gozlin was compelled on the failure of his project, to quit the kingdom. Boson, nevertheless, taking advantage of the growing confusion throughout France, assumed for himself dominion over Provence, and was crowned there as king in 880, by the bishops and nobles of the country.

Meanwhile the Normans continued their daring incursions throughout the realm, growing bolder and bolder from constant success; but, young as they were, Louis and Carloman seem to have been of different spirit from their father and grandfather, and the moment the disputes concerning their title to the throne were settled, they raised an army for the purpose of punishing the national enemies. Louis III. was at Vienne, in which he had besieged

Hermengarde, the wife of the usurper Boson, when he heard that Varamongde, the Norman chief, having plundered Arras had advanced as far as the gates of Beauvais, with a numerous and well equipped army, attended by a strong body of cavalry, and evincing a degree of discipline and military skill such as had never before distinguished a "barbarian" host. Abandoning Vienne the young prince hastened to meet the pirate, to whom he gave battle at Saucourt in Vimeu about three leagues from Abbeville. Nine thousand Normans are said to have perished in the conflict; but, though victorious in the field, the king obtained no immediate advantage from his momentary triumph. "The Neustrian troops," says M. Burette, "were so accustomed to flight, that a mere handful of the Normans having entrenched themselves in the neighbourhood of the battle-field, were sufficient by a night attack to put their conquerors to rout." Notwithstanding this disgrace, however, the battle had the effect of clearing the country for awhile of its tormentors, who retreating from France, went to spread destruction and terror through Germany, where capturing Aix-la-Chapelle, they stabled their horses in the cathedral, and desecrated the very tomb of the imperial Charlemagne.



Louis III. died in 882, whether in consequence of a fall from his horse, or of some ordinary sickness is disputed, and his brother Carloman reigned alone for the next two years, during which he was constantly occupied in endeavouring to expel the Normans, who had already renewed their harassing warfare. One of their hordes, driven across the Rhine by Charles *le Gros*, the youngest and only surviving son of Louis *le Germanique*, to whom, in

consequence of the extinction of the family of Lothaire, the imperial sceptre, as well as that of Germany had devolved, had sought refuge in the vicinity of Laon and about Rheims, whence Hincmar, the archbishop, now upwards of eighty years old, had fled from before them, with the holy relics, and sacred vessels and property of his church. Carloman at once gave them battle and obtained a victory; but, contrary to their wont, the Normans remained in the country, spreading themselves in bands through various districts, and continuing their ravages with unabated zeal and vigour; inso-much that the young king, hopeless of success in a desultory contest, felt it necessary to resort to the policy of Charles the Bald, and instead of protracting the struggle, bribed them to quit the kingdom. Not long afterwards, [884] while engaged in a hunting-party near Corbie, Carloman met his death from a wound inflicted by a stag, or, according to the annalist of Metz, by a dart from one of his attendants, who had aimed it at the deer.

There was still one son of Louis the Stammerer living, a posthumous child of his second wife, the first having been divorced; but his legitimacy was doubtful, and as he was, moreover, but a child, his claim to the throne was set aside in favour of the Emperor, Charles the Fat, who, it was thought, would be better able to protect the nation against the Normans, who had reappeared in greater numbers and with more audacity than ever. The whole empire of Charlemagne was thus for a moment restored under one head; but the mind and heart of the son of Pepin were wanting, and a brief term was sufficient to destroy the unity of Europe, probably for ever. Charles was both an indolent man and a coward; and instead of combining the resources which he possessed, for the purpose of striking a determined blow at the enemies of his people, he had recourse to the vilest expedients for ridding himself of their opposition. In the first instance, he invited one of the Scandinavian chiefs to an interview at a place on the Rhine, near where the isle of Batavia is formed by the separation of the River, but instead of meeting him there, he procured his assassination by agents employed for the purpose. This aroused all the ire of the revengeful Northmen, who shortly afterwards brought to the mouth of the Seine the strongest fleet that had yet mustered upon the coast; and, landing a large army, they at once marched upon Paris, which they invested in the year 885. The siege was long and terrible. Count Eudes, eldest son of Robert the Strong, who governed the city, was a man of distinguished talent and valour; and, by his influence over the citizens and the people, who had flocked from the surrounding country for shelter within the walls, he was enabled to maintain a stern and successful defence. The Normans in vain strove to effect an entrance beyond the ramparts. All the stratagems they could devise were put in requisition; all the engines then invented were plied to the utmost; the moat was filled up with the dead bodies of French captives; and assault and storm were tried on every point, but in vain. For more than twelve months this dreadful state of things was suffered to endure before Charles, who held his

voluptuous court at Pavia, could be induced to bestir himself in behalf of the bravest and best of his subjects; and when he did at last advance to their aid, it was with such listless and tardy steps, that few deemed him sufficiently in earnest to risk an encounter with the foe. Count Eudes, indeed, was so exasperated by his dilatoriness, and reduced to such straits for want of provisions and other necessities, that he resolved on a dangerous and desperate expedient to hasten succour. Quitting the city in secret, he contrived to make his way through the camp of the besiegers, and penetrating to the quarters of Charles at Metz, he shamed the monarch into at least a shew of vigour. The presence of Eudes, however, being necessary among his beleaguered followers, he hastened to return—an exploit of a more hazardous



nature than even that he had accomplished; for the Normans having discovered his absence, had set guards to watch every approach to the city, and to arrest all who might attempt the passage. Eudes, however, effected his purpose, clearing, it is said, a way with his sword, and resuming the command of his brave followers, he prepared them with all dispatch to co-operate with the force which he announced as approaching to relieve them. But he was yet doomed to severe disappointment and mortification. The Emperor, having arrived at the plain of St. Denis, and surveyed the enemy before him, instead of instantly offering battle, sent them an offer of seven thou-

sand pounds weight of silver, a promise of free passage for themselves and their enormous booty, and an intimation that Burgundy, which had not been subjected to spoliation, would afford them a much richer harvest than they could find in any part of exhausted France. The terms were accepted by the pirates, and the memorable siege of Paris was thus ignominiously ended. The citizens, however, were indignant at the conduct of their sovereign; and notwithstanding the treaty into which he had entered, they refused to allow the Normans to pass up the Seine through the city. Ebles, the nephew of the warlike bishop, who had assisted in the defence of the capital, both with his arm and counsel, killed with an arrow the captain of the first barque that strove to advance, on the Emperor's guarantee; and the enemy, knowing from experience that it was useless attempting to force their way, and too intent upon their purpose to abandon the prey which had been indicated to them, drew their shallow vessels from the river by main strength, at about two miles below Paris, and launched them again at a similar distance above, in order to pursue their course without further obstruction.

Nor was Charles himself suffered to escape without punishment for his dastardly imbecility. The whole empire was loud in exclamation against him; and at a general Diet, convoked for that purpose at Tribur, he was solemnly deposed from all authority by the unanimous voice of all the assembled chiefs and ecclesiastics, and his realm, divided into eight separate kingdoms, was conferred upon men who had distinguished themselves in the several countries over which they were elected to preside. Charles *le Gros* died a few weeks afterwards, uncared for and unlamented.

The crown of France on this partition was conferred upon the gallant and able Eudes, Count of Paris—Charles the Simple, the son of Louis II., before referred to, being again passed over as unfit to govern. Eudes entered vigorously and at once into the duties of his administration. The Normans having carried fire and sword through the fertile plains of Burgundy had pushed on into Champagne, where Eudes followed them with a strong and confident army; and overtaking them among the passes of Argonne, near Montfaucon, obtained there a brilliant and decisive victory. As on former occasions, however, the slain barbarians were speedily replaced by fresh bands; and the king, after a struggle of several years' duration, in the course of which the country was half depopulated, and its cities, towns and villages, reduced to mere wrecks, was obliged to revert to the expedient of purchasing the forbearance of his inveterate foes by large sums of money, and this, giving offence to the great feudatories who had raised him to the throne, led to conspiracies and revolts against him, which ended in the acknowledgment and elevation of Charles the Simple by a powerful party, as legitimate king. This youth was consequently crowned by Fulk, Archbishop of Rheims, in 893; but being of weak intellect, and seeing the prospect of a protracted struggle for authority, he gladly availed himself of a proposal of Eudes to share with him the throne and government. The count was as

honest and generous as he was brave; and on his death-bed in 898 he advised, in order to prevent public distraction and disorder, that without regarding any supposed claims of inheritance in his own family, Charles might be hailed as sole monarch of the kingdom by all parties.

The reign of Charles was such as might have been expected from the character of the prince. The functions of government were wholly performed by the great feudatories, and the condition of the inhabitants grew gradually worse and worse from the scourge of the Normans, and the exactions of the rapacious chiefs who held them in domestic thrall. All shew of resistance to the foreign freebooters indeed ceased. People had no longer anything save life to defend or lose, and this was as easy and endurable in barbarian bondage as under the petty tyrants among whom the nation had been parcelled out. The whole country is described as being little better than a desert, marked at intervals with abandoned towns and villages, smouldering in ashes. "You might," says an old chronicler, "have journeyed for leagues together, without so much as hearing the bark of a dog." The invasion itself under these circumstances was necessarily brought to a close. The roving bands by which the country had been infested, found it requisite to establish themselves in settled habitations, in order to avoid perishing of famine, among a starving population; and when new hosts now came on the trail of their countrymen, it was to settle as colonists, rather than to pursue the lawless career of brigands. Rollo, the same chief who had been bribed by Charles the Bald in 876, and who had afterwards figured at the siege of Paris against Count Eudes, had by a long series of daring exploits placed himself at the head of the Norman forces, and now sought to legalise his claims to a home in the country of his choice. After burning the monastery of St. Martin of Tours, and sacking Bourges, he marched to Paris, where a proposal was made, that Charles should give Rollo his daughter Gisèle in marriage, should confer upon him the rank of a great feudatory, and endow him with possession of the whole province of Maritime Neustria, extending from the sea to the river Epte. The feeble monarch dared not reject these terms, however haughty, and merely stipulated that the Norman in return for such ample concessions should embrace the Christian faith, and do fealty, according to the custom of the Franks for his feudal estates and dignity. He accordingly received formal investiture of what thenceforth became the Duchy of Normandy, and became nominally a liegeman of France. The circumstances attendant on this ceremony, however, shew the slight degree of subjection in which Rollo and his people were inclined to be really held by their suzerain. The stern old warrior was told by the officiating prelates to stoop and kiss the foot of the king. "Never, by God!" he indignantly exclaimed; and when he was prevailed upon to order one of his soldiers to perform the prostration as his proxy, the veteran, instead of stooping as he was directed, raised the foot of Charles to his mouth, and in so rude a manner, that the sovereign was toppled from his throne to the ground. The

French nobles, it is added, witnessed this strange scene in silent sorrow, while bursts of loud laughter pealed from Rollo and his assembled warriors. The husband of the princess Gisèle, was immediately afterwards baptised at Rouen, having for his sponsor Robert, Duke of France, a brother of the brave Count Eudes. The baptismal name of the Duke of Normandy was Robert; but as he is best known in history by his first appellation it will be unnecessary here to distinguish him otherwise. The government of Rollo it may be added was the most vigorous and judicious of any fief throughout France. He administered inflexible justice, as well among the ancient inhabitants, who found in him such a protector as the realm had long needed, as among his countrymen; and by promoting the agriculture and commerce of the province he restored it to fertility and comparative wealth. So efficient was his sway, and the system of military police which he established, that, according to Orderic Vital, "a child might have traversed his domains, with a purse of gold in his hand, without fear of molestation." It is even affirmed that, being one day on a hunting excursion, the old chief suspended on the branch of a tree a pair of golden bracelets, which remained there for two years without any one daring to touch them.

For the cession of Normandy, Charles was soon after compensated in some measure by the acquisition of Lorraine, which reverted to him on the death of the son of Arnoul without issue; but he was incapable of profiting by lessons either of prosperity or adversity. He had formed an attachment for a low-born and insolent favourite named Haganon, to whom he delegated his whole authority. This minion, for his own purposes, refused to admit to the king's presence Henry, Duke of Saxony, subsequently King of Germany, and Robert, Duke of France, when they came to remonstrate on the maladministration of affairs. For four successive days did these nobles attend at court, for the purpose of apprising their besotted sovereign of the hazard to which his conduct was exposing him, when, failing to obtain an audience, Henry is reported to have exclaimed indignantly, that "Haganon would shortly share the throne with Charles, or that Charles would be reduced to the base condition of Haganon;" an expression which, after no great lapse of time, was proved to have been prophetic.

In the year 920, in the general assembly convoked at Soissons, the nobles who attended brought all their reeds or wands of office, and each after the other breaking them in the presence of the king, threw them at his feet on the earth, at the same time renouncing all allegiance to him as their king. Charles, at the end of this ceremony, remained alone on the field of the meeting; and on retiring learned that the Duke of France had been proclaimed sovereign in his stead. He withdrew thence to Lorraine, whither Robert however pursued him, expecting, perhaps, little or no resistance. But Haganon, who had no other friend, had preserved his fidelity to the fallen monarch, and hastened to his aid with an army of Normans, whose services he had purchased on the banks of the Meuse. A battle ensued on the plain

of St. Medard, near the Aisne [923] in which Charles himself took part. Here King Robert, his white beard floating on his mailed breast, seeing that the conflict was sternly contested, seized his banner, and spurring onward into the midst of the *mêlée*, dashed at Fulbert, his rival's standard-bearer.



"Take care of thyself, Fulbert," cried Charles at this moment; when the standard-bearer turning himself and perceiving Robert, avoided the blow aimed at him, and dealt one in return which laid his antagonist headless at his feet. At the termination of the fight, however, Hugues, the son of Robert, remained victor on the field, which was strewn with the bodies of no less than eighteen thousand slain. Charles fled from the spot to Germany, to solicit an asylum at the court of Henry of Saxony, who had prophesied his disgrace; while Hugues, unambitious of the regal title, sent to his sister Emma, the wife of Raoul, Duke of Burgundy, to know what he should do with the crown which had fallen into his hands in consequence of his father's death and the defeat of Charles. Emma is said to have replied that "she had rather kiss the knees of her husband than those of her brother," and this decided the victor to proclaim Raoul [13th July, 923] King of the French.

The ambition of old Rollo seems to have been stirred by this juggling transfer of crowns, from the turmoil attending which he had hitherto kept aloof. In order to collect around him a powerful party, and at the same time to discredit the cause of his new sovereign, he declared himself the faithful

vassal and protector of the vanquished king, to whom he had sworn allegiance. Charles, however, was still at a distance; and on that account the lure of the Norman seems to have failed. As concerns the exile, indeed, there appears to have been no serious intention of restoring him entertained by any party; but he was too important, as an instrument of intrigue, to all to be left to pursue his fortunes at large. Herbert, Count of Vermandois, incited to that end, it is believed by Raoul, was eventually successful in entrapping him into his power, by a promise, confirmed by an oath, to restore him to the throne from which he had been driven. The simple-minded king, giving credit to his assurances, went to St. Quentin, where the count received him in all respects as a monarch, and kissed his knees in token of a renewal of homage. So sincere did he seem in his professions of loyalty, that when his son refused to kneel as he had done, Herbert seized him by the neck, and bowed him to the ground by force. That night Charles was entertained magnificently by his host, and might have dreamed himself once more a sovereign, but before morning he was aroused by guards, and conducted as a prisoner to Château Thierry, and shortly afterwards to the tower of Péronne, whence he was occasionally brought forth to grace a state pageant, or to overawe King Raoul, when indisposed to accede to the unreasonable demands of his refractory subject; but he was never afterwards permitted to regain his liberty. His queen, Elgiva, escaped to the court of her brother, Athelstane, in England, with her son, Louis, who subsequently recovered his father's throne, and became known to history as *l'Outremer*, a surname applied to him in consequence of his long exile beyond sea. Rollo was prevented from taking any share in the transactions which followed, by his death, which happened shortly after Charles's incarceration. He was succeeded by his son William Longsword.

Herbert of Vermandois profited largely from being custodian of the puppet-king. In the first instance he obtained for his son, a child of five years old, investiture of the Archbishopric of Rheims—the boy being placed on a table at the time of his mock election to that dignity, and made to repeat some answers got off by rote from a catechism of the day, and afterwards consecrated and enthroned in due form. Next the count demanded the earldom of Laon for himself; but this Raoul, who had little left of his nominal kingdom but the empty style of sovereign, had the courage to refuse; upon which Herbert immediately brought Charles from his prison, reinvested him with his regal robes, and took him to the Norman court, where William Longsword at once saluted him as king. The conspiracy assuming now a dangerous aspect, won instant submission from Raoul, who ceded Laon to the Count of Vermandois, and procured the unhappy Charles to be sent back to his miserable quarters at Péronne, where he soon afterwards died. A fresh demand succeeded from Herbert; but this time Raoul was less pliable, and determined to trust to the issue of a contest, in which he succeeded in driving his adversary from France, and compelling him to seek

refuge in Germany. Raoul himself, however, soon followed his rival to the tomb, dying without leaving male issue, in the year 936.

The crown was thus a second time placed at the disposal of Hugues, Duke of France, who again rejecting it for himself, conferred it upon a third party, Louis l'Outremer the son of Charles the Simple, whom after thirteen years of exile, he recalled from England, to take upon himself the dangerous office and responsibility of king, at the somewhat unripe age of sixteen.

Louis IV. occupied the throne for the comparatively long period of eighteen years; but his reign has been characterized as "merely a long humiliation" for himself and for France. Hugues seeking to profit from his generosity, as Count Herbert had done from his treachery, obtained from him, immediately upon his landing, investiture of the Duchy of Burgundy—a fief which was claimed by Hugues le Noir (the Black), brother of Raoul, who defended his inheritance with the utmost bravery, and with such success that the whole power of the king and the Duke of France was insufficient to wrest from him more than a few detached corners of his dominions. Failing thus in his design upon Burgundy, Hugues next demanded Laon; but Louis, for the powerful reason that this was all that remained to him of the ancient regal domains, refused his request, and preferred risking an unequal and doubtful struggle rather than to be utterly despoiled in the kingdom, which he now perceived too clearly was but nominally his. Fortunately on appealing to the Emperor Otho, that monarch espoused his quarrel in time to save him from deposition, if not from disgrace; for when the imperial troops arrived to his succour he was already besieged by Hugues, and "the most faithful of his followers" had abandoned him to his fate. The withdrawal of Otho, however, left him as feeble as before, and conscious that he was unable to maintain his ground against the powerful forces at the command of Hugues, he withdrew into Aquitaine with the hope of raising new friends and resources among a population known to be utterly inimical to the sway of the Dukes of France. He was well received by this people, but he obtained from them nothing save barren compassion. All ranks and classes, in fact, had become tired of the incessant wars and disorders by which the country was rent and ruined; and all sought to husband their means, in order, after the example of the Normans, to bring back to the land tranquillity and public and individual prosperity.

During these transactions—forming the principal events of six or seven years—William Longsword, Duke of Normandy, met a tragical fate, through the treachery of Arnoul, Count of Flanders, by whom he was basely assassinated, at the close of a conference in one of the Islands of the Somme, near Pecquigny, [A. D. 943], where they had met for the purpose of arranging some differences that had grown up between them, in consequence of the protection afforded by William to Herluin of Montreuil, Arnoul's personal enemy. The Duke's son, Richard, besides being illegitimate, was but ten years old. Louis l'Outremer therefore, thought the occasion favourable for

strengthening himself against Hugues ; and hastening to Rouen, he received the homage of the young duke, who had been already recognised as their chief by the Normans, and assumed to himself the guardianship and tutelage of the lad. The eagerness of Louis to grasp the prize which he fancied already in his hands, however, occasioned him to overreach himself. He took Richard at once to Laon, where, child as he was, he immediately discovered that he was a prisoner. His Norman attendants, and even his tutor, were sent away ; and his very guards, though Franks, were severely reprimanded for allowing him to go in pursuit of game beyond the walls of the castle in which he was confined. It thus became evident that the intention of Louis was not merely to educate the boy, as he had promised, in the precepts of Christianity, and the refinements of a polished court ; but to separate him from all intercourse with his friends and subjects, preparatory to stripping him of the rich inheritance which had devolved upon him ; and which the king so earnestly coveted, as a stepping stone to retrieve his own shattered fortunes. Osmond, Richard's Norman governor, penetrating the design of Louis, devised a bold stratagem to frustrate it. Disguising himself as a groom, he found means of access to the castle, and of secretly communicating with his pupil, whom he one day contrived unperceived to wrap in a



bundle of hay, and to bear away, thus concealed, on his shoulder, to the suburbs of Laon, where horses were in waiting to convey them to Coucy, where they arrived before dawn the next morning.

Louis, stung to the quick at being thus foiled, now made an infamous proposal to Hugues, Duke of France, to depose young Richard, and to part Normandy equally between them. Hugues' virtue was not proof against such temptation; and a large army was accordingly set on foot by their joint resources for the conquest of that rich province. Scarcely had the king, however, passed the frontiers, than, finding no resistance from the wily Normans, whose object was to lull him into fatal confidence in his security and their submission, till they could organize an effective opposition, he picked a quarrel with his ally, and sent him back to Paris. But the double perfidy of Louis did not long escape its merited punishment. Hugues obtained speedy support from the nobles to whom the king had rendered himself obnoxious by his grasping avarice and ambition; and the Normans, under the feint of being favourable to the king's pretensions, provided he would sanction some local stipulations which they submitted to him, contrived to procrastinate a final decision until a large body of their countrymen, invited for that purpose from the North, arrived on the coast, under the command of Haigrolde (Harold) a Danish prince, who had been under great obligations to Richard's father, and enabled them once more to take the field as asserters of their own and their prince's independence. A battle was immediately afterwards [A. D. 945] fought on the banks of the Dive, a short distance from Rouen, in which the Franks were routed, and Louis himself fled alone towards the neighbouring open country, where being found and recognised by a Norman soldier, he was made prisoner, and delivered into the hands of his foes. In the negotiations for the release of the king which ensued, Hugues, who, however he might have desired to humiliate Louis, was necessarily inimical to Norman ascendancy, took the most prominent part, and succeeded at length in ransoming him from captivity at Rouen, but only to detain him prisoner in his own dominions. As the price of his freedom, the unfortunate monarch eventually consented to surrender Laon to the duke; and to go forth, landless as well as powerless, among his subjects—an outcast rather than a king. Thus ruined and helpless, Louis had recourse to the Emperor Otho, the brother of Gerberge, his queen, who, supported by Conrad of Burgundy, made an incursion into France; but failing in their attack upon Laon, they were fain to withdraw from the unprofitable warfare, and to leave Hugues, who, as well as the king, was the Emperor's brother-in-law, to the exercise of his power or his mercy, according as his inclination might prompt. It was in vain even that the Pope interposed in behalf of the exile. Hugues treated with contempt the bull of excommunication issued against him; and when at last he condescended to enter into a treaty with his sovereign, it was as a master, dictating terms, rather than as a vassal, requiring pardon for his manifold and flagrant rebellions. Laon was restored to the crown; but all substantial power was retained by the Duke of France; and after a nominal reign of four additional years, Louis terminated his woes and his life, by a fall with his horse, while in chase of a wolf, on the road between Rheims and Laon, in 954.

Lothaire, the son of Louis IV., was but thirteen years old at his father's death; and he was consequently fully as dependant as his predecessor for support and protection upon his great vassal Hugues; who, as the price of his adherence, solicited and obtained a grant of the duchy of Aquitaine, as he had in former years obtained infeodation of the dukedom of Burgundy. The result, in the latter instance, was similar to that in the former. William of Aquitaine stoutly defended his inheritance from aggression, and was so well sustained by the chiefs and vassals over whom his rule extended, that he was enabled for more than two years to baffle all the power of France, when, fortunately, his adversary was compelled to relinquish the hopeless contest by his death, which occurred on the 16th of June, 956.

The demise of Hugues made no change in the government of France. King Lothaire was yet but fifteen years old, and of the three sons of the deceased duke, Hugues, or Hugh Capet, the eldest, on whom devolved the ducal coronet of France, had not passed his tenth year. The respective mothers of the lads, Gerberge and Hedwige, were sisters, and they, with the sanction and countenance of their brothers, the Emperor Otho, and Bruno, Duke of Lorraine and Archbishop of Cologne, wisely agreed to educate their children together, that they might afterwards be induced to treat each other as friends and kinsfolk. The result was beneficial alike to the princes and the country. No domestic strife or rebellion disturbed the reign of Lothaire, and in all the foreign wars which arose, the Duke of France and his brothers were always found among the foremost defenders of the king and his throne.

The military transactions of this reign are of little general interest or importance. An attempt was made by Lothaire to recover Normandy from the dominion of Richard the Fearless, but as might have been expected, on a comparison of the character of the French and Norman races, without effect. Subsequently, an attack was made upon the Count of Flanders, from whom a few places of little political consequence were wrested; and finally the ambitious king was hardy enough to venture on a contest for the rich fief of Lorraine with the Emperor Otho II. In this strife he nearly succeeded, after a stealthy march upon Aix-la-Chapelle, the Imperial residence, in capturing his rival's person. Otho, it is said, had just sat down to dinner, and was compelled to flee from table, to escape from being made prisoner, while Lothaire and his followers remained behind, and made merry over the viands which the fugitives had not had time to taste. But this surprise aroused all the ire of the German, who forthwith assembled an army, consisting of sixty thousand soldiers, with which he passed the frontier, spreading terror as he marched, and advanced successively upon Rheims, Laon, and Soissons, whence he sent a message to Hugh Capet, intimating that he would sing under the walls of Paris a louder *Alleluia!* than had ever been previously heard there. Accordingly, as he proceeded, he collected an immense crowd of priests, in company with whom he encamped on the heights of Montmartre, where in order to perform his threat to the letter, he

ordered his troops and the ecclesiastics to sing in chorus "the Canticle of the Martyrs—*Alleluia!* and *Te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus Domine!* till the inhabitants of the neighbouring city were astounded at the strange reverberation." This, however, was the only vengeance the indolent, and somewhat good-natured Emperor sought to take. After frightening the Parisians with his serenade, he turned the head of his army towards home, which, however, he was not permitted to reach without loss. In crossing the Aisne, [978] which had been swollen by recent floods, he lost, in a timely attack made by Lothaire, the whole of the booty which he had collected in the French territory, with all his baggage and the rear-guard of his unwieldy host. Shortly afterwards the terms of peace were concluded between Otho and Lothaire, by which it was agreed that Lorraine should be deemed a dependency of the French crown, and though the Emperor was still to hold it, he was to treat it in all respects as a fief of France. This peace lasted for four years, when, on the death of the Emperor, Lothaire endeavoured once more to seize the province; but before he had been able to effect much towards its conquest, he was stricken with mortal sickness, said, by contemporary annalists, to have been the consequence of poison, administered by his faithless queen, Emma, and he died in the month of March, A. D. 986.

Of Louis V., surnamed the Slothful (*le Fainéant*), who succeeded his father, all that appears to be well known is that he was nineteen years old when he ascended the throne, that he threatened his mother, and her reputed paramour, Adalberon, Bishop of Laon, with the punishment due to their alleged crimes of adultery and murder, and that he reigned but fourteen months. His death, like that of his father, has been attributed to poison, also said to have been administered by his queen, Blanche, who, as the reward of her perfidy, obtained in marriage Hugh Capet, for whose benefit the crime is believed to have been perpetrated. Louis le Fainéant was the last of what is called the Carlovingian race of the Kings of France.

It will have been readily conceived, by the most cursory reader, that, during the troubled times of which the present chapter has treated, the progress of civilisation must necessarily have been extremely slow, and retarded by the most serious obstacles: yet the facts which attest that mankind was not stationary, but constantly making advances towards improvement, are not few nor uninteresting. In the first place the church, seeking its own advantage, no doubt, rather than the advantage of the community, claimed and procured for itself full liberty of thought, on matters of faith and opinion; a privilege which, conceded to the clergy, could not be wholly denied to others, on subjects which did not always come within the limits of canonical enquiry. Hence the step gained was one of intellectual freedom, and though the ambitious ecclesiastics of the age sought to reserve to themselves the boon they had acquired, they were unable to suppress the spirit of enquiry which their own demands and dogmas had called into existence. It was in vain that the priesthood endeavoured to assert authority

over the minds, reason, and consciences of the people; the schisms, controversies, heresies and persecutions, which incessantly followed each other, proclaim aloud their failure. The brain of man was not to be moulded into one unvarying die; but would exert, despite of penalties and denunciations, the intelligence which had been infused into it, whenever an opportunity occurred. It need not, and cannot, be denied that the spiritual power was ever foremost in the work of knowledge. The ignorance and barbarism of the temporal orders, the violence and iniquity which pervaded all ranks and classes of society, and the fact that all the schools which existed were devoted exclusively to the instruction of ecclesiastics, are sufficient to account for this; but the dependence of the clerical orders upon their lay fellow-men for support and protection, prevented them from acquiring such ascendancy as gave them absolute or unlimited controul.

M. Guizot, in his 'History of European Civilization,' among some few deductions which seem unsound, has advanced much that explains the relations of the church with the laity during the period under review. "At this time," he says, "temporal power was mere brute force, intractable ruffianism. The church, on the contrary, however imperfect its notions of morals and of justice might have been, was still infinitely superior to such a government, and the cry of the populace was continually raised, beseeching it to supersede the dominant power. When a pope or a few bishops therefore proclaimed the deposition of a sovereign, and that his subjects were freed from their oath of fidelity, such an intervention, although doubtless liable to serious abuses, was often legitimate and salutary. The people were not in a state to defend themselves against their rulers, and religion came to the rescue in the name of Heaven. . . . The radical vice of the church in its relations with the lay community, was the separation of the governing body from the governed, and the want of influence by the governed over the government. From this circumstance has arisen the major part of the abuses which then, and still more at a later date, cast odium upon the church." This separation arose from the exclusion of laymen from all participation in framing the ordinances of the church, and in performing the rites and celebrations enjoined by the Christian hierarchy. "The people assisted in the government of the church simply as spectators. The ecclesiastics engrossed all the business of discussion and deliberation—everything that could expand the individual faculties. For their adherents nothing remained but to listen and believe. Thus we perceive the early vegetation and growth of the subsequently established idea that theology, or religious questions and affairs, are the privileged domain of the clergy, that the clergy alone have a right to decide on and even to canvass them, and that on no account, nor under any pretext, ought laymen to interfere. It has required," adds Guizot, "ages and terrible revolutions to subdue this theory, and to bring back, even partially, religious questions and science to the public domain."

There was nevertheless a sufficient degree of union between the members

of the church and the great body of their followers to prevent their coming into actual hostility. The priesthood was formed, not from the upper order, but from what may be designated as the better sort among the lower classes—men in the same condition of life as the majority of their disciples; and their duties required them constantly to mingle with the flocks entrusted to their spiritual care, to sympathize with their wants, relieve their sufferings, and in a great measure to share their fortunes. Hence the clergy and laity had many interests in common, and were compelled to adopt the same usages and manners. There was a gradual infusion of learning and refinement into the latter; and the bishops, priests and abbots, in return, took arms, when required, in defence of the nation, and of their own and their neighbours' property. "In this respect, therefore, there was a parity of destiny and situation between the clergy and the people, which, if it did not correct, certainly lessened the evil of the separation between the rulers and the governed."

Of the moral and intellectual condition of the church itself little can be favourably asserted. Christianity was still diluted with a large intermixture of paganism, as derived from the mythology of ancient Rome, from the practices and worship of the Celtic Druids, and from the creed of the old Germans. There still remained, as well among the priesthood as the people, an implicit faith in magic, enchantment, divination and witchcraft; and the ecclesiastics made no attempt to enforce by example the precepts of mercy, justice and peace, which they enjoined from the pulpit. Their lives were openly lewd and licentious:—they indulged their passions and appetites like true barbarians; and sought rather to profit by the crimes and vices of others than to put an end to so fertile a source of revenue. Even their zeal for conversion was tainted with avarice. They baptized any, whatsoever their belief in the gospel, who were able to pay the fees demanded of them—except indeed the Jews, who had a kind of probationary mulcting to undergo, before being admitted within the pale of the faithful.

This unhappy race was everywhere subjected to plunder, confiscation and insult, and their persons and property was always insecure. They were permitted by the laws to purchase and hold slaves; but, as a Christian could not be retained in servitude by a Jew against his will, a refractory pagan serf had only to announce his conversion and be baptised, in order to obtain emancipation. The injustice of this was in vain represented to the king and the heads of the church. When Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons, was applied to on the subject, he replied, "What should I do? Ought I to refuse baptism to the slaves of the Jews? The Apostles and their disciples did not ask nor wait for the consent of the masters of those whom they baptised." And when the Jews sought to assert their rights over their bondmen by force, the pious bishop, in his zeal for proselytism, exhorted all Christians, throughout his diocese, to withdraw from intercourse with the blasphemers, and scrupled not to employ all his influence over other bishops to join him in persecuting and fleeing his opponents.

The enormous growth of the papal power amid the confusion which prevailed during the greater part of the Carlovingian era, may be estimated from the fact, that although the bishop of Rome had acknowledged his subjection to the Empire until the death of Charlemagne, he was enabled so early after that event as the year 817 to assert, though covertly on that occasion, his independence. Paschal, on his election to the pontificate, caused himself to be installed without any sanction from, or application to, Louis the Pious. It is true that the pope afterwards sent an apology to the Emperor, accompanied with magnificent presents; but the important step had been taken and made sure, and about forty years afterwards it was converted into a precedent for the election of Sergius, even in defiance of the Imperial will. From that period, although occasional disputes arose as to the right of the Emperor to ratify the appointment of the successors of St. Peter, the pope was virtually released from all subservience, and became, throughout the territories of Rome and Ravenna, an independent sovereign.

The monastic orders continued to spread on every side throughout Europe. From the beginning of the sixth century all ranks of the clergy were joined with, or selected from, the monastic body, who indeed, living in communities, and devoting their lives to learning and learned disputations, were far in advance of all others in knowledge and scientific acquirements. Their rapid progress appears also to have been in some measure accelerated by the impression made by their singular mode of life and assumed austerities upon the population among whom they were located. "The monks," says Guizot, "struck the imagination of the barbarians more forcibly than the secular clergy. The latter indeed—the bishop and the simple priest—were less reverently looked upon by those who were accustomed to see, maltreat and despoil them. An attack on a monastery, on so many holy men congregated in one holy place, was a much more serious affair. Thus the monasteries became, during the barbarian epoch, places of refuge for the church, as she herself afforded an asylum for the laity. . . . After the death of Charlemagne chaos came again. The church relapsed into it as well as civil society, and emerged in like manner to enter into the frame of feudalism. The dissolution of the Empire produced in the ecclesiastical order almost the same effect as in the civil, the complete disappearance of unity, and a break-up into local, partial, and individual distributions. This situation of the clergy originated a struggle, not previously known, between the sentiments and interests of a fief-holder and those of a priest. The chiefs of the church were placed between these two temptations, each striving for the mastery. The ecclesiastical spirit was no longer so powerful or universal; private interest had more charms, while the taste for independence, and the habits of feudal life, relaxed the bonds of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. An attempt was made to avert the effects of this relaxation, and to organize national churches in various quarters, by means of general assemblies and clerical councils and convocations;" but there were no means available for the desired end. Every

bishop, prelate and abbot, was isolated in his diocese or his monastery; and the abuses and disorders of simony, in the disposition of benefices, by introducing persons into the church who had no sympathy with its interests and institutions, prevented any cordial or general co-operation.

“Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, may be considered as the prime-mover of the unity which he sought to effect. He was constantly engaged in the labour of organizing the French church—seeking out and employing all the means of intercourse and correspondence he could command to restore the union which had been broken. On the one hand, he maintained the independence of the church with regard to temporal power, and on the other its irresponsibility of the papacy. Knowing, on one occasion, that the pope wished to enter France for the purpose of excommunicating some contumacious bishops, he is reported to have said, ‘If he come here to excommunicate, he shall return with an anathema on his own head.’” Claude, bishop of Turin, and Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, assisted in the laudable work of endeavouring to reform the church and the clergy, but, like Hincmar, they were unable to combat successfully against the abuses of the crown and the papacy, and disorders of all kinds not only continued, but daily increased and grew worse. Religion became therefore a mere source of profit to its professors; and the people had little better knowledge of the gospel, than that it had been rendered a prolific instrument of extortion and oppression.

The rise and consolidation of the feudal system, as a necessary result of the confusion of the times, has been already noticed. All classes of society, it may be added, readily embraced it as the only refuge left—the church, the crown, towns and villages were alike constrained to adopt and support it. Ecclesiastics became superiors and vassals, cities had their lords and their bondsmen, and royalty itself was reduced to the condition of a paramount seignory. All things were bestowed as fiefs to be held by feudal tenure, not only lands, but even personal rights and privileges—as the cutting of wood in forests, and the fishery of rivers. The church even conferred its casual revenues in the same way—its fees derived from baptism, from funerals, and from the churching of women. The distribution of the population of the country was completely changed by the new state of society. “Previously, the masters of the territory, the conquering population, had lived in masses more or less numerous, either sedentary in the interior of towns, or roving in bands over the country. By the feudal system these men came to live isolated, each in his peculiar habitation, at great distances from each other. This change, of course, exercised material influence upon the character and course of civilisation. The social preponderance passed at once from the towns to the country; private property necessarily became of greater importance than public property, and, in the same manner, public life was absorbed in private life. . . . The feudal family, consisting of the chief, his family, his vassals and retainers, and a priest, who always officiated as chaplain of the castle and curate of the neighbouring village, was thus

invested with a peculiar character, and became close and concentrated—perpetually on the alert to defend itself from external enemies.” A love of home, and a gradual approximation to domestic manners was the natural consequence; and women in the bosom of feudalism acquired the important station in society which they still retain.

The relations which sprung up between the lord and his vassals in this compact association were not unimportant. The necessity for mutual protection and dependence existing between the serf and his master not unfrequently led to feelings of esteem and affection; and it was by no means rare that a favourite retainer was emancipated from his hereditary thralldom through gratitude for some distinguished service rendered to his patron. The church has the merit of having done much towards procuring freedom for the ancient slaves; but her voice was weak, and was too often lifted up in vain, until a feeling of generosity, arising from personal appreciation, had been awakened in the bosoms of those to whom it was addressed. Hence we perceive that, although in the laws of the Visigoths the exercise of humanity towards slaves is enjoined, no explicit directions on the subject were embodied in the code of the Franks, until the reign of the Emperor Louis le Débonnaire; when in one of the capitularies it is explicitly stated that “It behoves every one to treat his inferiors with gentleness and compassion, in exacting labour, levying debts and imposing fines. All ought to consider one another as brethren, since all have one God and father, to whom they can with equal confidence address the prayer ‘Our father who art in Heaven,’ and all have access to the same baptism.” A victory over the national enemies, marriage, the birth of a child, recovery from sickness, and success in any doubtful undertaking, were often celebrated with an act of emancipation. Superstition contributed also its part. To confer freedom upon the serf was deemed a laudable act of devotion under affliction, or on the apprehension of death; and to do so was furthermore held in the light of a penitential atonement for crime. Admission to monastic, or other clerical orders, was sufficient of itself to confer freedom; and little effort was as yet made to check this accession from the lower order to the clerical ranks, from the impression which almost universally prevailed, towards the close of the tenth century, that the end of the world, as predicted in the book of *Revelations*, was approaching. “Multitudes of men,” says a modern Historian, “in this manner acquired personal liberty; yet so little did they value real freedom, that they generally remained, at least during life, attached from habit to their masters and their usual situations; or they submitted anew, in order to secure subsistence and protection, to some church, monastery, or wealthy baron. No just idea was then entertained of civil liberty, of the security arising from the wise and constant administration of just and good laws, nor of the power of the common people, acting with union, as one body, to counteract the power of the aristocracy, oppressive equally of them and of royalty.”

Nothing more adverse to regal authority, it has been observed, could well have been devised than the feudal system; for although that system, superficially considered, might appear to be one of mutual dependance upon, and advantage to, the chief and his suzerain, yet the relations between them were so unequal, and their interests so remotely allied, on questions of the most frequent occurrence, that the pyramid, to which feudality has been likened, may be said to have stood more frequently upon its apex than its base. Thus far only was it of benefit to the king, that, when a great vassal chose to be refractory, on account of some exclusive privileges, or pretension, it enabled his lord to muster an adequate force to reduce him to submission; but on the other hand, when a number of feudatories, as was most commonly the case, combined for the purpose of extorting some new concession from the crown, they invariably gained the ascendancy, and compelled submission to their demands, however unreasonable. The sovereign had no army, nor means of raising an army, but such as were furnished by the vassals and aids of his nobles. He had no permanent revenue or standing force. Whenever money or troops were necessary, therefore, they had to be raised at the moment; and when the measure for which they were required happened to be obnoxious, they occasionally were not forthcoming at all. But even when the monarch was able to take the field promptly against a rebellious vassal, the chances of success were generally against him. The outlawed baron, shut up in his castle, or roaming through the country with his armed retainers, could securely defy assault or capture, for some time; and, if wealthy and well connected, the quarrel was not limited to his own domain, but leagues were formed in his favour, and diversions carried out by his friends, until his assailant was glad to admit of such compromise as he was willing to yield, or to withdraw from the contest without satisfaction of any sort. The necessity which gave birth to the feudal system, was that of finding protection from enemies from whom the power of the crown was unable to shield its subjects; it was prolonged as a means of rendering those who had been driven to resort to it as independent of legitimate authority, as of illegal force or fraud.

In the progress of legislation, the Carlovingian era was in all respects beneficial to the nation at large. However vicious or debased, the monarchs of the race of Pepin were mostly men whose education had been conducted under the best masters; and a taste for literature and science, and a respect for persons of superior acquirements, seems to have been hereditary among them. Hence we perceive that the emancipation of slaves was encouraged, and mercy and equity were uniformly enjoined; although there was no adequate power to enforce their observance. An attempt was made by Charlemagne, and revived from time to time by his successors, to reduce the floating laws, customs and traditionary observances of the people to system; and something like acknowledged law began to take the place of arbitrary caprice and vengeance. As a proof that considerable advances were made towards civilization, it may be mentioned that the assembly of Attigny in

822 prohibited the form of ordeal, called trial by the cross, that the council of Worms in 829 abolished the cold water ordeal; and that the council of Valence in 855 ordained that, although the trial by wager of battle was sanctioned by custom of long standing, it should no longer be tolerated, at least as respected the decision of private quarrels; but that the victor in a duel who killed his antagonist, should be amenable to the law against homicide, while the person slain should be deprived of burial, and of the prayers of the church. These prohibitions, it is true, were ineffectual, and little attended to; but it was something that there was sufficient intelligence and discernment extant, to suggest and place them upon record.

Of the state of the arts during the period embraced by the present chapter, little testimony can be gathered relating to the time that elapsed after the death of Charlemagne; but there can be no reasonable doubt that they must rather have declined than been advanced. The constant inroads of the Normans unsettled everything, rendering property insecure, and the possession of wealth—the greatest incentive to the display of talent as well as to the prosecution of trade—a source of added danger instead of a guarantee of peace and prosperity. Agriculture and the arts of husbandry were brought almost to a stand. Men would no longer till fields, when deprived of all hope that they would be permitted to reap the harvest. Their horses, cattle, and flocks, and even their implements of industry, were driven or taken away for sale or destruction; and the inhabitants, turned from their regular and peaceful occupations, neglected everything but the means of supplying their absolute necessities, which many are believed to have done as frequently by the plunder of their neighbours, in less disturbed districts than their own, as by honest labour. On the settlement of the Normans, however, a new impulse was given to the activity of the whole nation; and the weakness of the various kings who succeeded Charles the Fat, may be in a great measure ascribed to the unwillingness of the great body of the population to desert the profitable pursuits from which they had long been involuntarily restrained, merely to support the pretensions of a race of princes whose incapacity to protect them had been so notoriously manifested.

As a consequence of the general neglect of agriculture during the long period of confusion which prevailed throughout the kingdom, famines were of frequent occurrence, and of the most frightful character. It is related in the '*Annales Fuldenses*' that in the year 850 a modius—supposed to be about a bushel—of corn sold at Mayence, for not less than ten shekels of silver, or £3 10s. sterling. Archbishop Rabanus Maurus is said to have maintained at this time, at his own cost, more than three hundred paupers, besides those whom he fed daily in his own house. A woman coming to his house to obtain relief, fell down on the threshold and expired from hunger. A man, journeying, with his wife and infant son, towards Thuringia, where he hoped to find greater abundance of provisions, was so reduced by exhaustion, as to propose that the child should be sacrificed to appease the cravings

of its parents. The mother remonstrated, but in vain, for the father, taking the boy from her arms, withdrew into the forest through which they were travelling, in order that his wife might not witness the death pangs of her babe. It is added, that the special interposition of providence saved the child from destruction. As the father was in the act of raising his sword to strike the fatal blow, he lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and beheld two wolves devouring the carcase of a deer. He ran to the spot—nerved by despair—and chasing away the ravenous destroyers, brought the still bleeding venison and his living son to the mother. Such stories as this, whether true or false in themselves, could not have obtained contemporary belief as they did, without being at least probable as regards the extreme destitution which pervaded the land:—and under such a state of things it would be in vain to look for more than the bare lingering existence of any of the higher arts among the people. That which was indispensable seems alone to have been practiced. The ornamental and luxurious were, it is known, preserved, in remote monasteries and places of comparative security; but they may be said to have remained in abeyance rather than to have been in use. Costume, literature and science, from the death of Charlemagne, can at best, be represented as having merely remained stationary. Of the advances towards refinement and morality made by the French to the period at which our narrative has reached, it will be sufficient, perhaps, to state that the following law was considered necessary to restrain polygamy:—"Let no man take more than two wives, for the third is superfluous."

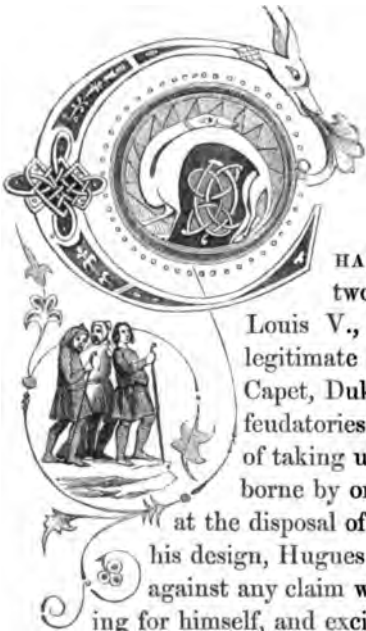




CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF HUGH CAPET TO THE DEATH OF CHARLES LE BEL.
A. D. 987 TO 1328.

USURPATION OF HUGUES—ROBERT I., BERTHA AND CONSTANCE—HENRY I.—PHILIPPE I.—NORMAN CONQUEST OF ENGLAND—BERTRADE—FIRST CRUSADE—CHIVALRY—LOUIS LE GROS—WILLIAM CLITO—LOUIS VII.—SECOND CRUSADE—QUEEN ELEANOR—À BECKET—PHILIPPE AUGUSTE—THIRD CRUSADE—RICHARD CŒUR DE LION—JOHN—FOURTH CRUSADE—THE ALBIGENSES—ENGLAND—BLANCHE OF CASTILLE—ST. LOUIS—CRUSADES—CHARLES OF ANJOU—EIGHTH CRUSADE—PHILIPPE LE HARDI—JOAN OF NAVARRE—SICILIAN VESPERS—PHILIPPE LE BEL—WAR WITH ENGLAND AND FLANDERS—POPE BONIFACE VIII.—SUPPRESSION OF THE TEMPLARS—LOUIS X.—PHILIPPE LE LONG—CHARLES LE BEL—PROGRESS OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.



CHARLES, Duke of Lorraine, the younger of the two sons of Louis *d'Outremer*, and uncle of Louis V., became, upon the death of the latter, the legitimate successor to the French crown; but Hugues Capet, Duke of France, the most powerful of all the feudatories of the kingdom, seems to have been desirous of taking upon himself the regal title which had been borne by one, and on several occasions had been placed at the disposal of others, of his paternal ancestors. To favour his design, Hugues appears, long before, to have taken exception against any claim which might arise from Duke Charles, objecting for himself, and exciting a prejudice in the minds of others, that when that prince had accepted from the Emperor Otho the Fief of Lorraine,

and thus become the vassal of a foreign Suzerain, he had voluntarily abandoned his right of inheritance and had ceased to be a Frenchman. This, whether a new doctrine, as it seems to have been, or otherwise, found ready acceptance from the French clergy, to whom Hugues was ever a munificent benefactor; and they having preached it with due energy to the people, till the public mind was sufficiently wrought upon, Hugues convoked a general assembly of ecclesiastics and nobles at Noyon, and there [3rd of July, 987,] caused himself to be chosen and anointed king.

This revolution was in most respects similar to that which had overthrown the Merovingian dynasty. As Pepin had in that instance acquired nothing new but the rank of sovereign, so in the elevation of the house of Capet, Hugues did little more than exchange a ducal for a regal diadem. He gained only the barren homage of a few men who had previously been esteemed his equals; since neither his wealth nor his substantial authority were materially, if at all, affected by the change. It appears to have been to the want of significance indeed to which royalty had been reduced by feudalism, that Hugues was mainly indebted for the unanimous suffrages of his peers at the time of his accession. Had any large increase of wealth or power depended upon the transfer of the sovereignty the same resistance as was formerly offered to Raoul and to Eudes would, in all probability, have been opposed to the exaltation of the new king. As it was, it was an advantage to the feudatories generally that the most wealthy of their own body should be placed at their head; since he, being already in possession of an ample revenue, derived from his various overgrown fiefs, which comprehended the city and surrounding territory of Paris, large portions of Picardy and Champagne, the district of Chartrain and Perche, and the counties of Blois, Touraine, and Maine, required no additional provision for the maintenance of a court, and had so much at stake in the country, that he could not fail to be at all times zealous for its prosperity and eager in its defence. Besides, had a prince of the Carlovingian family been accepted at this time, it was obvious that he could have nothing of his own to bestow upon his friends and followers by way of reward, but would rather have been tempted, by poverty, to lay hands upon the estates of others to supply his necessities; while Hugues, without molesting any person, could afford to be liberal from his superabundance.

It was scarcely to be expected, however, that the Duke of Lorraine would acquiesce in an arrangement which deprived him of what he could not but consider as his birthright. At the end of about ten months from the coronation of Hugues, he entered France with such an army as he had been able, in the meanwhile, to collect, and through the friendly aid of his nephew, Arnoul, Archbishop of Rheims, and of Adalbéron, Bishop of Laon, he obtained possession of the cities of which those prelates held the government, and established himself, for a time, in those ancient royal domains as king. Hugues was unable to take immediate steps for the expulsion of his

rival. For nearly two years he appears to have been occupied in settling his disturbed kingdom, and in conciliating, or reducing, such of the turbulent vassals of his realm as hesitated or refused to acknowledge his authority. But in 991, being freed from the pressure of domestic foes, he turned his undivided attention upon the so-called pretender, and being foiled in an attempt to take Laon by assault, he had recourse to intrigue, when, gaining the secret co-operation of Adalbéron, he, on the night of Holy-Thursday obtained admission to the city; and surrounding the palace in which Charles and his nephew were residing, made them both prisoners before they could prepare the least resistance. The unhappy prince was transferred at once to the banks of the Loire, where, after a long confinement in the tower of Orléans, he died unnoticed and forgotten. His son Otho inherited his duchy of Lorraine; but he never made an attempt to retrieve the fallen fortunes of the race of Charlemagne, and died in the year 1006 without issue.

Of the remaining acts of the reign of Hugues little has been preserved, except the records of a long and tedious quarrel with the Pope, concerning the deposition of Arnoul, Archbishop of Rheims, and the elevation of Gerbert, a monk of Aurillac, and tutor to Robert, the king's eldest son, to the vacant see, without the sanction of the Pontiff. In this dispute Pope John XV. had eventually sufficient influence to procure the dethronement or resignation of Gerbert, who, nevertheless, afterwards ascended the chair of St. Peter as Sylvester II.; but Hugues could never be brought to release Arnoul, who accordingly remained in his prison at Orléans till the reign of Robert I. Hugues himself died in the autumn of the year 996. His character, as drawn by the monkish historians of the period, is that of a pious and benevolent king, who loved justice and mercy, was remarkably unostentatious, and exceedingly generous towards the church. Some curious illustrations, in support of these assertions, are added. Before he had attained the throne he was informed, in a vision, that the bones of the illustrious Saint Ricquier had been carried away from the abbey of Centule by the plundering Flemings, and that his future prosperity would depend upon his becoming the restorer of the sacred treasure. Thus forewarned, he made a warlike incursion to the Flemish frontier, and after a brief delay had the satisfaction to recover the holy relics, which he personally assisted to carry, with naked feet, and streaming eyes, for the space of a league, and finally saw deposited in the re-established monastery from which they had been stolen. He never after his coronation put on again the royal robes or crown, hoping by this species of penance to atone for the guilt of his usurpation; and on his death-bed, he adjured his son in the name of the holy and indivisible Trinity, never to interfere with the goods or rights of the convents; but to preserve himself with the most religious awe and reverence from the wrath of "the great St. Benedict, their common father."

Robert, who for several years had been associated with his father in the government, ascended the throne without opposition; but scarcely had he

entered upon his regal duties, ere he found himself involved in a dispute with Gregory V. who had succeeded John in the Pontificate, concerning the legality of his marriage with Bertha, a princess of the house of Burgundy, who was said to be related to him within the prohibited degrees, and to one of whose sons by a former marriage he had stood sponsor, and thus created an additional link of spiritual propinquity quite sufficient for the purposes of papal interference with his domestic affairs. Not that the Pope acted gratuitously, or solely on religious scruples in the matter. Had that been the case a dispensation would have rectified all that was amiss; but Gregory was a creature of the Emperor Otho III., whose claims upon the Duchy of Burgundy were materially disturbed by the match which Bertha had made in defiance of his objections. The Pope remonstrated against the alliance, and desired Robert to put away his queen; but the king, who was tenderly attached to his wife, refused, and finally the marriage was declared null, and Robert, remaining still contumacious, was excommunicated, and an interdict placed upon his kingdom. The consequences of such a proceeding, in that age of ignorance and superstition, was terrible. The ecclesiastics took part with the pontiff. The administration of justice was suspended; no religious rites or celebrations were performed; the dead remained unburied, the sick unshriven, the child unchristened, and the betrothed unmarried. So great was the consternation produced by the denunciations of the preachers of mercy and charity that, if Cardinal Pètri Damiani may be believed, the court was speedily deserted by all classes save only two menial servants; and these, though they remained to supply the absolute wants of the king and queen, shunned all immediate contact with them, supplying their food by means of a turning-box, and purifying whatever they had used at table by fire, before touching it themselves, lest they should be contaminated, and subject themselves to the wrath of the bearer of the keys of Paradise. In the midst of this persecution, which was enough to have shaken the strongest nerves, Bertha is said to have been delivered of a child with a head and neck resembling those of a goose. This, which, whether a gross practical imposition, as may fairly be believed, or a mere monkish falsehood, was represented to Robert in the light of a miraculous interposition of Providence, in behalf of the Pope, against the obnoxious marriage and contumacy of the royal couple. The king's spirit was bowed, he publicly acknowledged his errors and besought forgiveness, Bertha was divorced, Arnoul, the deposed Archbishop of Rheims was released from prison and restored to his See, the excommunication of Robert, and the interdict upon France were removed, and a new queen [998] was found for the repentant monarch, in the person of Constance, daughter of William, Count of Arles.

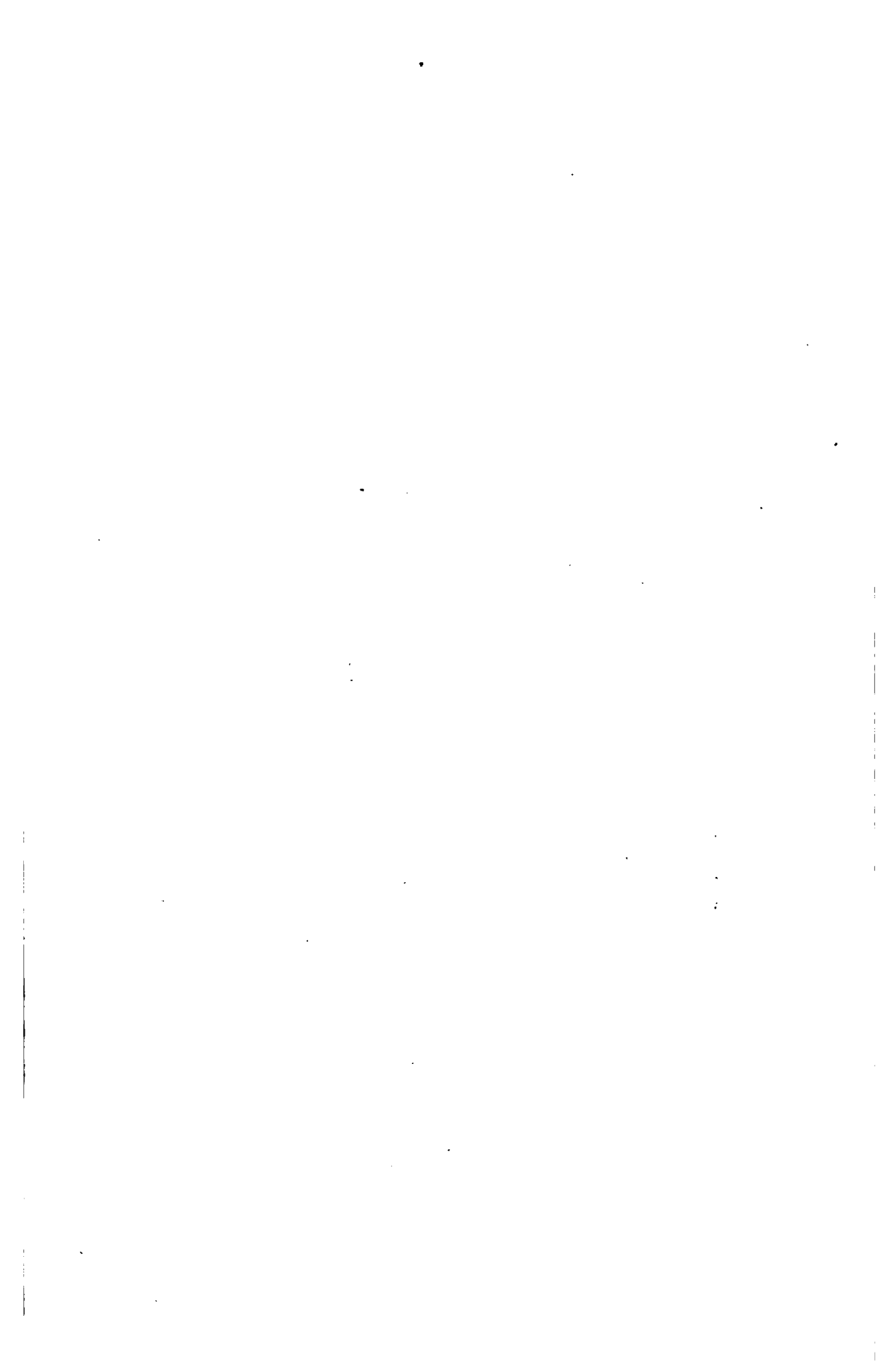
This dispute closed, the scanty annals of the time afford little information concerning the social progress of the people, or the history of the kingdom during the reign, beyond a few details connected with the scandal of the court, and the feuds of the great peers, among whom the realm was divided;

the records and traditions of which have been cherished and preserved, when matters of higher moment have been suffered to perish. A brief glance at the transactions which have reached us will suffice to shew their insignificance. Constance, the new queen, was a haughty and capricious woman, who ruled her husband as a tyrant rules his slave. Her character, in all respects, offered the most striking contrast to that of Robert. He was pious, strictly scrupulous in his attention to external devotion, easy-tempered, and charitable to a fault. He lavished all the treasure he possessed, and all that he could obtain, upon whosoever came to solicit his bounty; and being easy of access, these grew into a daily multitude; till his want of means hindering him from giving, he was fain to connive at thefts committed in his palace, and even from his person, by the mendicants who resorted to his court. He composed hymns for the service of his flatterers the clergy, and sometimes, assuming the garb of a monk, presided over the singers in the choir of St. Denis. Constance, on the contrary, was as gay and vain as she was imperious, and thought more of the splendour and pageantry of her high station, than of its duties or responsibilities. While the King fed a number of the poor from time to time, in the halls of his palace, whither they came to receive their dole from his own hands, the Queen kept high festival in the state apartments, amid a crowd of minstrels and courtiers, who chanted rude love songs, or *romances*, or danced and revelled, as though mirth were the only business of existence.

The impetuous passions of Constance, who was extreme in all things, embittered the domestic life of her husband. On one occasion, being jealous of the influence acquired by Hugues of Beauvais, a court favourite, she not only planned his assassination, but procured it to be executed in the presence of the king, while he was engaged in a hunting party; and the spiritless monarch, "as was his duty," was speedily reconciled to his imperious consort. At a later period, [1022] she was the personal actor of a still greater atrocity. A rumour had gone abroad that a woman, lately come from Italy, had brought with her into France a new heresy, and placed herself at the head of a sect which denied the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the efficacy of baptism and of the intercession of saints, and the immaculacy of the Virgin Mary. These doctrines she and her disciples were said to teach in their nocturnal assemblies; and such was their zeal and enthusiasm that not only were multitudes of the common people induced to embrace their tenets, but several priests of Orléans were betrayed into an approval of them in contravention and defiance of the canons of the Romish hierarchy. King Robert, notwithstanding the persecutions which he had sustained from the church in his own person, was still perfectly orthodox in his creed; and, having heard of the growth of the sect, which was subsequently classed with the Gnostics, he, accompanied by Constance, went to Orléans to have the matter investigated in his presence. The trial of the heretics occupied eight hours, when, being convicted of the maintenance of impious errors, and



King Robert.



refusing to retract, thirteen of their number were adjudged to the stake. So determinedly pious was the queen, and so great was her indignation against the blasphemers, that this sentence appears in her estimation to have been too lenient; and, seeing at the head of the condemned, as they were conducted without the walls in procession to the place of execution, a priest named Stephen, who had formerly been her confessor, she became so enraged that she struck him with the staff which she bore in her hand so violently as to deprive him of one of his eyes. The procession, however, moved on, with hymns and psalms, to the place of sacrifice, when on being bound to the stake and the flames reaching them, their singing, according to the callous-hearted chroniclers of the period, "was converted into lamentations, and several of them cried out in the midst of the fire that they abjured the fiend and his works; but, ere any approached to deliver them, they were all reduced to ashes." Robert and Constance were witnesses of this horrible scene!

During the interval between the date last cited, and the year 1000, a lingering war had been carried on by Robert against a more legitimate competitor than himself, for the recovery of Burgundy, lapsed through the death of Henry, a brother of Hugues Capet, notwithstanding that the king's only tenable claim to that duchy was derived from his queen Bertha, who had been repudiated. Succeeding, however, at last in obtaining the fief, he bestowed it upon his second son Henry; and about the same time he caused his eldest son Hugues to be associated with him in the kingly office, according to the custom of the sovereigns of the Carlovingian dynasty, who had adopted it as a precaution against any disputes concerning the succession, which, in the unsettled state of men's minds concerning the law of inheritance, were likely to arise on every vacancy of the throne. In this instance, the ceremonial was unavailing, for the young prince, who, according to the ancient flatterers of royalty, had already displayed qualities which entitled him to rank among the most illustrious of his race,—although a revolt against his father is the only fact which they furnish in support of their assertion,—died at an early age, and left his vacant place to be filled by his brother Henry.

The sanctimonious superstition of Robert, besides being a pest to himself, was a curse to his subjects. He persecuted all who dared to think otherwise than as they were directed by his ecclesiastical councillors, whether christian, infidel or jew, though the last, perhaps, from being the most wealthy, was most frequently subjected to torture, confiscation and murder; not, however, that the king was naturally cruel, but that he fancied, in conformity with the common creed of his age, that the cause of religion was benefited by the extermination of the heterodox. Among his other acts of passionless devotion he accomplished a pilgrimage to all the various shrines of the saints and martyrs distributed throughout France, and afterwards visited Rome, where on the vigil of St. Peter and St. Paul, he assisted in the celebration of

mass at the Vatican, and laid upon the altar a silken purse, containing the words and score of a hymn of his own composition! an offering which, however pious, is said to have grievously chagrined the attendant cardinals and priests, who expected a prize of a much more available nature.

The Emperor Henry II., whose mind was similarly warped by priestcraft, was a great admirer of Robert, and two interviews between the monarchs are recorded; the first upon the Meuse in 1006, and the last in 1023 in the town of Ivois, on the frontiers of Champagne and Luxembourg. At each of these Robert received many rich presents of gold, jewels, horses, and armour; while Henry in return would accept only a volume of the gospel, the binding of which was inlaid with gold and precious stones, and a cabinet of similar workmanship, containing a tooth of St. Vincent, the blessed martyr. These regal courtesies were not without effect on the minds of the subjects of the princes; subjects being ever prone, indeed, to look upon kings, unless convinced by the strongest and saddest proofs to the contrary, as scarcely less than divine. At the death of Henry without issue in 1024, the fruits of his friendship towards the French monarch became apparent in the offer which was made to Robert, by the Italian nobles, of the imperial crown, in prejudice of Conrad the Salique, Duke of Worms, the next in succession to the deceased Emperor. Fortunately for himself, Robert took so much time to consider the matter that ere he had decided, Conrad, who united extraordinary activity with considerable tact and talent, was enabled to secure the allegiance of most of the great feudatories, and thus to render the risk of a contest too hazardous for the timid king to attempt it.

The last years of the reign of Robert were disturbed by the revolt of his two sons Henry and Robert, occasioned, it is said, by the capricious tyranny of their mother Constance, who drove them from the court and compelled them to take arms in self defence. A civil war was the result; but as the father was not disposed to proceed to extremities against his children, an accommodation was effected after a brief parade, rather than conflict, and in the following year [July, 1031] the old king died at Melun, deeply regretted by the monkish chroniclers, who have bestowed upon him the panegyric titles of great, wise, and holy—the king of kings, the lord of lords, and the happiest of the blessed. Without assenting to these hyperbolic praises, it must be admitted that Robert was certainly one of the most popular princes of his line. He was “the protector of widows and orphans, and the stay and guardian of the poor; the king of the lowly, the support of the indigent and of beggars, and the father of his people;” but had he not been a king there is little doubt that he would have been a noteless monk in some obscure cloister. He appears to have wholly wanted energy, activity, talent, and that high feeling which springs, on the test, from moral conviction. He is believed to have been the first king who touched for the scrofulous disease which afterwards acquired the name of “king’s evil.” The long peace which prevailed during his reign it may be remarked was highly favourable to the

prosperity, the industry and the growth of art, and consequently of intelligence, among the people of France.

The eldest surviving son of Robert, who, as has been stated, was nominated heir to the throne in his father's life time, now assumed the crown as Henry I. He was not, however, permitted to enjoy a tranquil accession. His mother Constance, who had conceived an inveterate animosity against him, incited prince Robert, her favourite, to unfurl the standard of revolt, and contest his right by arms; and so suddenly were this young man's measures taken, and so vigorously carried out, that he succeeded in surprising his brother in Paris, and in driving him thence, with a retinue of not more than a dozen persons, to seek refuge with Robert the Magnificent, (better known, perhaps, by his *soubriquet* of *le Diable*) at Féchamp in Normandy. That duke, on condition of having Gisors, Chaumont and Pontoise, ceded to him, readily undertook the defence of his sovereign; and gathering an army speedily marched against the rebel, who after a stout resistance consented, on the mediation of his uncle, Foulque, Count of Anjou, to relinquish all claim to the throne and to accept instead thereof, the rich dukedom of Burgundy. Queen Constance at the same time obtained some rich presents and a settled revenue; but died shortly afterwards, to the great relief of her family and the whole kingdom.

Eudes, another brother of the king (said in an old chronicle, cited by Duchesne, to have been the eldest of the sons of Robert and Constance, but neglected on account of his intemperance or incapacity), seeing the success which had attended the rebellion of prince Robert, essayed one, a few years later, on his own account; but being promptly opposed by Henry, his followers were defeated in the first encounter, and he, being taken prisoner, instead of obtaining a splendid apanage, as he had hoped, was consigned [A. D. 1039] prisoner to the Tower of Orléans for the space of two years.

Previously to this last revolt a grievous famine had ravaged France for three successive years; the horrible circumstances attending which are thus described by the historian Glaber Rodolphus:—"In the year 1033, the season was exceedingly wet and unfavourable both for seed time and harvest. During three whole years the earth was so drenched with rain as to render ploughing almost impracticable. A modius or muid of seed yielded but a setier in harvest, when a setier yielded but a handful. The scarcity was universal. It first appeared in the east and depopulated Greece, whence it spread over Italy, France and England. All ranks who survived had grown sickly pale. A successful hunter could obtain any price for his game. The modius sold for sixty solidi, the setier for fifteen. Men lived on the roots of herbs and shrubs, and on dead carcasses. In the rage of hunger they could not abstain from devouring human flesh. Travellers were seized, torn and eaten, and guests were sacrificed while asleep, by those who had welcomed them to the enjoyment of hospitality. Children were decoyed into secret places and slain. The very graves were opened as storehouses of

provisions, and human flesh was exposed for sale in the public shambles of Tournus in Burgundy, disguised under another name. Bread was made of a proportion of white clay mixed with meal. The clergy, the nobles, and the wealthy of every description, did their utmost to mitigate the calamities of the period ; but great numbers of the people died notwithstanding."

About this time, Robert *le Diable*, Duke of Normandy, probably conscience-stricken on account of the enormities which had procured for him his characteristic surname, and, at the same time influenced, in some measure, by the growing fashion, which had latterly sprung up of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to obtain a remission of sins, announced his intention of making a journey on foot to Jerusalem. The barons of Normandy wished to detain him on the plea that it would be prejudicial to them to be left without a chief. The scene which ensued at an assembly of the duke's feudatories, is graphically related by Augustine Thierry. "By my troth," said Robert, "I will not leave you without a lord. I have a little bastard who if it please God will grow up and become a valiant man, and I am certain that he is my own son. Receive him therefore as your



chief ; for I declare him to be my heir, and from this moment I give him seizin of the duchy of Normandy. Choose him therefore forthwith ; and before you all I will possess him of this duchy as my successor." The Norman barons did what the duke proposed, because (says the old

chronicle) they found it convenient to do so. They swore fealty to the child and placed their hands in his. The new Duke was William, the son of Robert, by a beautiful damsel, named Arlette, the daughter of a tanner of Falaise; and who afterwards became renowned as the Conqueror of England. Robert having thus settled the government of his fief set out on his journey to the holy sepulchre, which he reached without any remarkable adventure, but on his return he was stricken with mortal sickness, and died at Nice in July 1034-5.

No sooner had the news of the old Duke's decease been made known in Normandy than several of the chiefs, notwithstanding their homage to William, took arms against him, protesting that a bastard and the grandson of a tanner was unworthy to hold supreme authority over the sons of the Danes. Roger de Toni, a great grand nephew of Duke Rollo, and Guy, Count of Macon, a nephew of Robert, preferred their several claims to the ducal throne, and each found support in a numerous body of malcontents, proud of the purity of their descent from the old sea-kings and pirates of Scandinavia. The young Duke was then not above eleven years old, and had need therefore of a protector. Fortunately one was readily found in Henry, the king, whose gratitude to Robert le Diable for defending him against his mother and brother at his accession, was thus proved to be sincere. Large armies were assembled, and after a protracted and desultory warfare of several years duration, distinguished only by the sack of a few helpless towns and villages, and the capture of some noteless castles, the hostile forces of Guy and William met (Roger is believed to have died in the meanwhile) [A. D. 1051.] in the Val-des-Dunes near Caen, where a complete victory over the insurgent chiefs secured to the Duke the hard-worn coronet bequeathed to him. In this battle King Henry is said to have distinguished himself by his bravery, but being unhorsed in the thick of the mêlée by Haimon a Norman chief, he would certainly have been despatched on the spot but for the timely succour of some French soldiers, who seeing his extremity, hastened to him, and put Haimon to the sword. The sanguinary and revengeful character of the young bastard is perhaps sufficiently illustrated by the following instance, which occurred during this war. While engaged in besieging Alençon, the inhabitants, assembled on the walls, thrust over, in his sight, some skins, which they beat from time to time crying out, "The hide! the hide! have at the hide!" alluding to the trade of his grandfather and his own base birth. William, enraged at this railery, immediately had the feet and hands of all the prisoners he had taken cut off, and thrown by the slingers into the town.

At a somewhat later period a quarrel sprung up between the recent allies Henry and William, in consequence of the former having afforded protection to a refractory Norman baron, who had signalled himself by constant opposition to his lord. A war ensued in which the superior skill of the Duke was evinced in all his movements. The French were worsted

in every encounter; yet such was the good feeling of William towards his former benefactor, that he never attempted to push his advantages beyond his own frontiers, nor to molest the king in person, notwithstanding more than one opportunity afforded for taking him prisoner. In the end, Henry consented to a settlement of all differences by negotiation; and in 1055 signed the treaty of Rouen, which re-established peace and amity between him and his overgrown vassal.

In the year 1059, Henry, feeling that age was creeping upon him, associated with him on the throne his eldest son Philippe, by his wife Anne of Russia, daughter of the grand Duke Jaroslaf. At his coronation, which took place at Rheims in the midst of a large assembly of counts, barons, archbishops, bishops and abbots, the prince had not attained his seventh year; but this did not prevent him from taking the required oath "to preserve to the clergy their canonical privileges, to the people the due administration of law and justice, and to the feudatories the protection which it might become a king to afford them." This being done the assembly with one voice exclaimed three several times, "We approve; we will; so be it."—The old king overlived this scene about twelve months, dying on the 4th of August, 1060, when he left his successor to the guardianship of Baldwin, Count of Flanders, who had become uncle to the lad by marrying Henry's sister Adela.

The minority of Philippe I. was passed in undisturbed tranquillity. Baldwin executed the important functions of his regency with fidelity, and evidently, from the fact of his having given no offence to the factious and turbulent nobles by whom he was surrounded, with mildness and discretion. Private wars and petty feuds throughout the realm abounded; but in these the regent took no part, either to encourage or discourage the combatants; feeling probably that the interests of the king would be best advanced by permitting those who might become dangerous foes to the throne to exhaust themselves and their resources in their efforts to destroy each other.

Of those, nominally subject to the crown of France, who distinguished themselves during this reign by their adventurous achievements, the Normans were most conspicuous. The restlessness of spirit of this bold and hardy race seems to have been uncontrollable, and insatiable; and their ambition was incessantly prompting them to some new enterprise. Having grown too populous in younger sons and landless warriors, Normandy now began to send forth her chivalry to make new conquests and settle new colonies. Numbers volunteered their services to Alphonso, the Christian monarch of Spain, against the Saracens, and acquired possessions South of the Pyrenees; others wandered into Italy; and forty knights, pushing on with their train towards the Holy Land, on arriving under the walls of Salerno, a small principality belonging to the Greek Empire, which was then blockaded by the Saracens, offered their services to the besieged, assisted to deliver the

territory from the hands of the invaders, and obtained as their reward the small domain of Aversa; where a number of their countrymen soon flocked to them from Rouen, Coutances and elsewhere; and in less than half a century they had acquired such daring as to be emboldened to attack, and such strength as to be able to make themselves masters of, the fertile realms of Sicily and Naples.

The most important event of the period, however, is the conquest of England, undertaken by Duke William in person; the results of which have been permanent and highly important, as affecting the history of the world. Edward, surnamed the Confessor, had in his youth been compelled by the victorious Danes to seek refuge, with his brother Alfred, and their mother Queen Emma, a sister of Richard II., Duke of Normandy, at the Norman court. He had been educated there, had acquired the Norman language, habits and customs, and formed all his friendships among the Norman people; he was consequently a Norman rather than a Saxon in all his prejudices and predilections; and all the great offices which he had to bestow, whether ecclesiastical or civil, were given to Normans invited by him from time to time to settle in England. This gross partiality and injustice naturally exasperated the Anglo-Saxon thanes and people; and the insolence of the foreigners subsequently proceeding to outrage, Earl Godwin and his family, the most powerful of the English nobility, took arms to chastise them. In the struggle which ensued Edward had recourse to the aid of the Northumbrian Danes, and Godwin and his sons were compelled to flee the country. It was at this period that the king invited to his court Duke William, whose famous exploits in war had already resounded throughout Europe. The Bastard obeyed the summons, and did not fail on his landing to remark innumerable circumstances favourable to an ambitious project which he appears then for the first time to have conceived. Edward, although married, had no children, and, having conceived a deadly aversion to his wife, who was a daughter of Earl Godwin, in order to excuse himself from cohabiting with her, he is said to have taken a vow of perpetual chastity. There was no fear, therefore, of his leaving issue; and the prince who was looked upon as his legitimate successor—Edward the Atheling, a descendant of Edmund Ironside—was far away, in Hungary, a perfect stranger to the English people, and nearly forgotten by them. Nor was this all. England seemed already to have become a Norman province. "On his arrival from Normandy," says Thierry, citing contemporary chroniclers for all his assertions, "William might have doubted whether he had quitted his own country. The fleet which he met at Dover, though manned by Saxons, was commanded by Normans. The garrison of a fort at Canterbury consisted of Norman soldiers, and, as he advanced, Norman knights, bishops, abbots and officers, thronged around and bade him welcome. Edward's favourites, in fact, went, as it was natural they should, to pay their respects to the chief of their native country, and, to use the language of the day, looked upon him

as 'their natural lord.'” It has been asserted, but on no credible authority, that the besotted Confessor promised, during the duke’s visit, to make him his heir at his decease. That the king would have desired to do so there need be little question; but that he entered into any engagement to that effect is highly improbable, though there is little doubt that William himself, before his departure, had projected the enterprise which he afterwards carried out. Indeed, if it be true that on obtaining possession of the person of Harold, the eldest son of Earl Godwin, who had been wrecked near the mouth of the Somme in Ponthieu, he compelled him to take an oath that on the death of Edward he would aid him with all his power to obtain the English throne, the matter must be considered as placed beyond all question. The circumstances attending this oath are thus related. William having extorted a promise of assistance, when required, from his guest, in order to bind him to the fulfilment of his word, summoned a general assembly of his barons and military retainers—or knights—to meet at Avranches or Bayeux; and there, the duke being seated in the midst of a crowd of Norman chiefs in a chair of state, holding a drawn sword in his hand, and crowned with a



circlet of gems, he caused two little caskets containing relics to be brought, and laid upon a large chest which stood in the hall of council covered with cloth of gold. When Harold stood in the midst of this solemn conclave, William thus addressed him: “I require thee, Harold, before this noble

assembly, to confirm by oath the promises which thou hast made to me—to assist me in obtaining the crown of England after King Edward's death, to marry my daughter Adela, and to send me thy sister that I may give her to one of my followers." The Saxon, taken by surprise, and not daring in that presence to deny his own words, approached the two small reliquaries with a troubled air, laid his hands upon them, and swore to execute his agreement with the duke. The whole assembly at the conclusion of his oath repeated, "May God be thy help!" Duke William then made a sign with his hand, upon which the caskets and cloth of gold were removed, and the chest below was found filled to the brim with the relics and skeletons of saints collected from all the neighbouring shrines and sepulchres, upon which the son of Godwin had sworn without knowing it. The Norman historians add that Harold, at sight of this enormous heap of sacred bones, trembled and changed countenance. The earl was soon afterwards suffered to depart, and immediately returned to England.

The Confessor died on the 5th of January, 1066, and on his death-bed he is said to have nominated Harold, and not William, as his successor. This however is a controverted point, and, be it as it may, Harold was unanimously elected and proclaimed king in a vast assembly of the chiefs, thanes and ecclesiastics, and of the citizens of London, immediately after Edward's funeral. The major part of the Normans, who had for a long period been preying upon the vitals of England, were now instantly dismissed; and some of these it was, on returning to their own country, who carried intelligence to William of the event on which his hopes and ambition had been staked. At the moment of receiving the news the duke was engaged in his hunting park near Rouen, trying a new bow and arrows. He became suddenly pensive, and giving his bow to one of his attendants, he passed the Seine, and hastened to his palace at Rouen, where, stopping in the great hall, he strode up and down the apartment, now sitting down, and anon rising up again, changing his seat and posture, as if unable to find rest. None of his people dared to approach him, but all stood apart, looking at each other in silence. At length an officer, who was admitted to William's familiarity, came in, and advancing alone towards the moody duke, exclaimed, "Sire, why should you conceal from us your news? It is commonly reported in the city that the King of England is dead, and that Harold, belying his oath towards you, has seized the crown."—"They say truly," replied William; "my chagrin arises from Edward's death, and the wrong done to me by Harold."—"Well, my lord," answered the courtier, "be not wroth at what can be amended. Though there is no help for Edward's death, there is a remedy for the wrongs of Harold. Justice is on your side, and you have valiant followers. Undertake then boldly:—that which is well begun is half accomplished."

Ambassadors were forthwith dispatched to England, who, being introduced to Harold, thus addressed him: "William, Duke of the Normans, has sent to remind thee of the oath which thou hast sworn to him with thy mouth,

and with thy hand upon good and holy relics.”—“It is true,” replied the Saxon king, “that I took an oath to William; but I took it under constraint. I promised what did not belong to me; and engaged to do what I could never perform; for my royal authority does not belong to me; and I could not dispose of it against the will of my country; nor can I, without the national consent, take a foreign wife. As for my sister, whom the duke claims, in order that he may bestow her in marriage upon one of his chiefs, she has died within the year—would he have me send him her corpse?” This answer being taken back to Rouen, William sent a second messenger, charged with reproaches, but expressed in mild and moderate terms, and entreating the king, that if he would not consent to fulfil all the conditions he had sworn, he would at least receive the young princess whom he had promised to make his wife. Harold, however, still refused; and, to avoid farther importunity on the subject, he at once married a Saxon lady, the sister of Earls Morcar and Edwin. Upon this, William swore in his rage that within the year he would go to England to exact all his due, and to pursue his perjured foe even to those places where he might hope to make the surest and boldest stand against the vengeance which he had provoked.

Preparations for war were immediately commenced on both sides. William published at all the then accessible courts of Europe the injustice and bad faith of Harold; and succeeded, in those days of superstitious bigotry, in creating a general impression upon the continent that the Saxon was a sacrilegious oath-breaker, and a traitor to his lawful prince. A complaint against him was lodged in the papal court—which there is good reason to believe had been previously bought over to the Norman interest, and on Harold’s refusal to submit his cause to the pontiff, whose right of interference with the independence of his crown he denied, Harold and all his adherents were excommunicated, and the kingdom placed under an interdict, by Alexander II., who acted wholly under the influence of a monk named Hildebrand—a man entirely devoted to the cause of Duke William. The Norman feudatories were then assembled, and all, without a single dissident, agreed that England ought to be invaded. A council or parliament of the commonalty of the duchy was then assembled, at which men of all conditions—soldiers, priests, merchants and freemen—assisted; but the voice for war was not so unanimous at this meeting; and William, finding that he must not in his projected expedition rely solely on the aid of his own vassals and people, had recourse to the neighbouring states for volunteers, offering good pay, and holding out the most alluring promises, to every tall robust man who would serve him with the lance, the sword, or the cross-bow.

At this time the papal bull of excommunication against Harold, together with a present, consisting of a consecrated banner from the apostolical church, and a ring, containing one of St. Peter’s hairs, encased beneath a diamond of considerable value, arrived at Rouen, and gave to the intended invasion a sacred character, which operated upon the populace, it is believed,

with nearly as great effect in the raising of recruits and resources, as the liberal offers and prospects held forth by the duke. Multitudes now flocked to him from all parts—from the provinces of Maine and Anjou, from Poitou and Britany, from France and Flanders, from Aquitaine and Burgundy, from Piedmont, beyond the Alps, and from the banks of the Rhine. Adventurers by profession, the idle, the dissipated, the profligate, all the outcasts of Western Europe, hastened to obey the summons. Some of these were cavaliers—knights—or warlike chiefs, others were simply foot-soldiers, or men at arms; some asked for pay in money, and others merely requested their passage, and all the booty they could afterwards make. Many desired grants of land in England—a demesne, a castle or a town—and others were content with the promise of having some rich Saxon lady conferred upon them in marriage. All the wild wishes which human avarice or covetousness could prompt were wakened into activity, and found utterance from the motley throng which gathered to pour themselves upon the fertile fields, and to desolate the homesteads of England. William, says the Norman chronicle, repulsed no one, but promised favours to every one according to his suit. He even went so far as to sell an English bishopric to one Remi of Fescamp for a ship and twenty men at arms.

While these preparations were going forward for the invasion, and the building and fitting out of vessels, the manufacture of lances, swords and coats of mail, and the collecting of money on loan or gift from the nobles, the clergy, the merchants, farmers and artisans, were in progress, William repaired in person to St. Germain, where King Philippe, still in his minority, was then holding his court under the tutelage of his uncle Baldwin. He saluted his sovereign in respectful and deferential style, which his ancestors had often omitted to do when addressing their suzerain. "You are my liege lord," he said; "if it please you to assist me, and should I, with God's grace, make good my right to England, I promise to do homage to you for it, as if I held it from you." Philippe assembled a council of barons, without which he was not permitted to decide any public question, and here it was determined that William ought not to be assisted in his conquest. "You know," it was urged upon the king, "how little the Normans obey you even now; and should they possess England it will be worse. Besides, were we to assist the duke, it would cost much to our country; and if he should fail in his enterprise, the English nation would be our enemies for ever." William next addressed himself to Count Baldwin; but he also refused to afford him any public support, though he is said to have furnished him privately with assistance in men, ships and stores.

By the middle of August 1066 the whole of the Norman fleet consisting of about 3000 vessels of all sizes, with the land troops on board, had assembled at the mouth of the Dive, a small river which falls into the sea between the Seine and the Orne. For a whole month however the winds were contrary, and the ships were compelled to keep in port. At last they were enabled to

move round to the roadstead of St. Valery, whence, after a few days of bad weather, they put to sea on the morning of the 27th of September, and reaching the English coast, while the vessels which had been ordered to act as a guard by Harold had returned to harbour for provisions, the whole armament landed at Bulverhithe, between Pevensey and Hastings, in the county of Sussex, on the 28th, where they were presently afterwards welcomed by the remnants of the old Norman court party of Edward the Confessor. The army which William carried with him on this occasion has been stated at not less than fifty thousand horsemen, and ten thousand infantry.

Harold, meanwhile, had been assailed by other enemies, his unnatural brother Tosti, and Harold Hardrada, king of Norway; who taking advantage of the strait to which he was reduced by the threats of the Norman duke, sought, if not to dispute with the king his throne, at least to plunder and despoil his kingdom before it should be ravaged by other foes. These invaders were promptly met and defeated by Harold at Stamford-Bridge near York, but ere he had quitted the neighbourhood of his victory he received intelligence of William's landing. He hastened by forced marches to the South, and as the indignation and hatred of the English against the Normans was thoroughly aroused, he found no difficulty in raising forces wherever he proclaimed his *hereban*. His certainty of success, and his impatience to rid the country of the presence of the foe, appear to have proved fatal to him. Instead of waiting for the re-inforcements which were flocking to London from all parts of the kingdom, he marched, within a week after his return from Yorkshire, to the Sussex coast, with an army inferior in numbers and equipments to that of William; and, ere his troops had sufficiently rested or refreshed themselves after their many causes of exhaustion, the hostile forces joined issue at a place called *Senlac*, since *Battle*, near Hastings, on Saturday the 14th of October. The conflict, which lasted for nine hours, was one of the most desperately contested and sanguinary upon record; but at sunset, Harold and his two brave brothers, Gurth and Leofwin, having been slain, William the Bastard—thenceforth called the *Conqueror*—remained master of the field, and of the destinies of the realm of England.

Baldwin, Count of Flanders and Regent of France, died about a year after the battle of Hastings, leaving the young Philippe, then only in his fourteenth year, without other controul than that of the national council, which influenced as it was by a number of conflicting interests, was an uncertain and unsteady guide for the conduct of a youth. The consequences soon became apparent in the abandonment of the king to unbridled licentiousness and extravagance, which, absorbing the resources of his legitimate revenue, compelled him to have recourse to ways and means which speedily drew upon him the censures and threats of the ever-encroaching and arrogant church of Rome. In the disposal of ecclesiastical benefices he

retained to himself the first fruits; and bishoprics and abbacies were exposed to sale to the best bidders. Pope Alexander II. had loudly exclaimed against these simoniacal practices; but when the tiara had passed to the brows of the imperious Hildebrand—Gregory VII.—remonstrance was abandoned for bolder measures; and the king was menaced with deposition and excommunication, and his realm with an interdict, if the system of “perverted avarice, and the barter of the gifts of the holy spirit” were persisted in by those who were said “slavishly to trample under foot a mother whom they were bound to respect and honour.” Philippe, who felt that the authority of the pontiff was irresistible, promised amendment; but probably without any fixed intention of adhering to his word; at all events he soon relapsed into the commission of the offences which were necessary to the support of his pleasures; and although no absolute rupture occurred at the time, “allowance being made for the youth of the king,” he was regarded thenceforward by the papal court with distrust and suspicion as a wayward and disobedient son.

The death of Count Baldwin also involved other results. He had left two sons, Robert, the eldest, who had already won for himself the title of Count of Friesland, and Baldwin, who succeeded his father in the government of Flanders. The history of Robert is characteristic of the age. Seeing, while yet scarcely arrived at manhood, the warlike ardour which prevailed and impelled men to go forth seeking adventures and fortunes through every part of Europe, he had desired and obtained from his father the necessary equipment of a rover, and sailed with a few vessels to the coast of Spain, then chiefly occupied by the Saracens. He made a descent first upon the shores of Galicia, but being overwhelmed by numbers, he had some difficulty in escaping to his ships, some of which are said to have been afterwards disabled by a tempest. A second time he attempted to establish himself in the Peninsula, but failing, he turned his attention nearer home, and made an attack upon Friesland, where he is said, by some, to have killed Count Florent, and, by others, to have landed immediately after the death of that chief, and thus made an easy conquest of the country. All agree that he married Florent’s widow, Gertrude of Saxony, and was installed as Count of the territory. On the death of his father, being piqued that his younger brother should be preferred to the paternal inheritance, notwithstanding the ample provision which he had obtained for himself, he gathered an army, and invaded Flanders, where in an obscure engagement, Baldwin VI. was shortly afterwards slain. Richilde, the widow of the vanquished prince, fled with her sons, Arnoul and Baldwin, to the court of the King of France for protection. Philippe, embracing the cause of the orphans, hastily levied an army, and invaded the territory of the “Usurper;” but his plans having been ill-concerted, and executed without judgment, he got entangled among the morasses and canals of Friesland, and when attacked, on a sudden, by Robert, who knew the intricacies of the country, he was signally defeated

near Cassel, his troops cut to pieces, and young Arnoul left dead upon the field. Philippe saved himself from death, or captivity, by an ignominious flight; and soon afterwards, notwithstanding the claims of Richilde and her second son, concluded [A. D. 1071,] a peace with the Count of Friesland, by which the latter obtained a guarantee for the possession of Flanders, and the French King consented to receive in marriage Bertha, the daughter of Florent and Gertrude, and consequently the step-daughter of Robert.

Projects of a more selfish and ambitious nature began about this time, to engage the attention of Philippe, and to rouse him, in some measure, from his life of habitual sensuality and indolence. William of Normandy having completed the conquest of England, had returned to his native land, "covered with blood and laden with plunder." His object seems to have been to deposit his ill-gotten booty in a place of safety, and to display his new wealth and importance in the eyes of his old subjects, and of all such as came to congratulate him on the great success he had experienced. He sent a splendid present to the pope, accompanied by the banner of Harold, which had been captured at Hastings; and large portions of his riches—which seemed inexhaustible—were distributed among the abbeys, monasteries and churches of Normandy; neither monks nor priests remaining without a guerdon. William gave them coined gold, gold in ingots, golden vases, and cloths richly embroidered in gold, which on high feast days they hung up in their churches, where they excited the admiration of all travellers and strangers. Raoul, a relative of the King of France, deputed, in all probability by Philippe, went with a numerous train to Rouen to witness the celebration of the Easter festival at William's court, when the French, no less than the Normans, contemplated with curiosity mingled with surprise, the enchased vases of gold and silver brought from England, and especially the drinking vessels of the Saxons made of large buffalo-horns, ornamented at each extremity with the precious metals. They wondered too at the beautiful features and the long flowing hair of the young Englishmen, whom William had taken with him from their own country, either as hostages or captives. "These things," says William the Poictevin, "and many others equally new to them, Raoul and his companions remarked, in order that they might relate them in their own country." Philippe heard the report with jealousy and misgiving. His vassal, previously too powerful as a Duke, had become the richest and most potent of European sovereigns, and might be a dangerous rival to his suzerain, whenever he should think proper to find a pretext for quarrel, and to put forth his strength. The king, therefore, grew daily more eagerly desirous of diminishing the influence of William in France, and sought an opportunity from time to time, of embroiling the affairs of Normandy in such wise that the province might fall a prey into his own hands, or at least be dissevered from its dependence upon the English crown. He dared not, however, appear singly in arms as an enemy, but maintained a sort of permanent ambuscade, watching every occasion of profitable inter-

ference, whenever a diversion arose in his favour out of the numerous private wars and feuds of the people.

One of these fortunate chances occurred in the year 1075, when Hœl, duke of Britany, whose fief had been, for many years, forcibly subjected to Norman domination, thought the moment favourable for the recovery of his country's independence. He accordingly refused to render the tribute and services which had been imposed upon him; and, when it was sought to exact these by compulsion, he took arms, and declared himself the liege vassal of King Philippe alone. A Norman army was forthwith led by William in person, who happened then to be in his native country on a second visit, to reduce him to submission, and he was soon beleaguered in the town of Dol; whither Philippe, on being appealed to for that purpose, hastened to carry him succour. The siege was raised, and the French, emboldened by success, attacked and defeated the Normans in a pitched battle, wherein they captured the whole of the baggage and besieging train of William. From some unexplained cause however, Philippe neglected to pursue his advantage; and a transitory peace was soon afterwards patched up between the French and English sovereigns, which seems nevertheless to have produced no change in their relative situations, nor to have established anything better on either side than the most hollow pretences of amity.

Other circumstances, which seemed promising to the hopes of Philippe, soon arose from the dissensions which infested the family of the Conqueror. William had three sons Robert, William and Henry. The first named, who was the eldest, and who bore among his countrymen the nickname of *Gamberon* or *Courte-heuse* (curt-hose) on account of the shortness of his legs, had been nominated by the Bastard, previously to his expedition to England, as heir to the dukedom of Normandy, and all the barons of that province had, as was customary on such occasions, taken the oath of fidelity to the young prince as their future lord. When his father had acquired the English crown, Robert, incited thereto it has been supposed through the intrigues of Philippe, required a renunciation in his favour of the paternal domains; but to this request, William, who may be fairly suspected of entertaining still higher designs than he had yet accomplished, and must have felt the importance of possessing Normandy in addition to England for the attainment of his ends, refused to accede, saying, in homely but decisive phrase, "My son I wot not to throw off my clothes till I go to bed." A violent quarrel ensued, in which the two younger brothers, William, surnamed *Le Roux*, or Rufus, (the red), and Henry took part against Robert, and thus commenced a rupture which was never healed till the conqueror's first-born was in his grave.

Robert is represented as having been rash, of a passionate temper, impatient to excess, and as ambitious as his father. He was suspected of having maintained a treacherous understanding with Hœl of Britany, with some other refractory vassals of Normandy, and with Philippe of

France. Under these circumstances it required little ingenuity on the part of his brothers, who were desirous of supplanting him in the succession promised him by their father, to exasperate him to such a pitch as should lead to his open rebellion and disinheritance. Accordingly watching their opportunity, they found him one day in his lodging, in the small town of L'Aigle, where William was temporarily staying, walking in the court of the house with some friends. They at once ascended to the gallery or balcony above, and after playing for some time at dice "after the fashion of the warriors of that age," they made a great noise and disturbance, and finished their annoying pranks by emptying a pitcher of water on the head of Robert and his companions. Enraged at this public insult, the young prince drew his sword, and rushing up stairs to the gallery threatened to avenge the affront in the blood of the aggressors. A tumult followed, which the king, who was drawn to the spot by the outcry, had much difficulty in appeasing; and during the night which succeeded the adventure Robert with all his friends and adherents quitted the town, hastened to Rouen, and endeavoured to obtain possession of the castle, with the intention of unfurling there the standard of revolt. In this attempt he was unsuccessful; and he was consequently compelled to withdraw beyond the Norman frontier to avoid being made prisoner, leaving several of his followers in the hands of his father's officers. An outward reconciliation was afterwards effected between William and his son through the mediation of Queen Matilda, the prince's mother; but this was soon broken, and Robert, quitting the royal court a second time, wandered through Flanders, Lorraine, and Germany, and thence through France and Gascony, visiting counts, dukes and wealthy commoners, relating to them his grievances and begging their assistance. All that he received, however, during this vagabond and mendicant career, he is said to have dissipated among minstrels, jugglers, parasites and abandoned women, and hence he was obliged to be incessantly begging or borrowing money at the most usurious interest. His mother sometimes contrived to remit supplies to him secretly; but William discovering this, forbade its repetition, and threatened with severe punishment whosoever should be found acting as messenger on any such errand.

After leading this degraded life for a long time, Robert repaired to the French court, and Philippe, still eager to retain him as an instrument, sent him to the castle of Gerberoi, situated in Beauvaisis, on the confines of Normandy, where he speedily gathered around him a band of hired desperadoes, from France, Normandy and other countries, and supported them and himself by making forays into and plundering the surrounding districts, confining his incursions nevertheless to the territories of his father and the Norman feudatories. So great was the terror spread by this banditti, and so formidable had it become through constant accessions of adventurers—among whom were many knights and redoubtable cavaliers,

and not a few men at arms who had deserted from the very household guards of William,—that the Conqueror deemed it necessary to go in person from England, at the head of a large army, in order to quell the marauders. He accordingly laid siege to the castle of Gerberoi, before which he lost much time and many men in fruitless efforts to storm the fortress, and in desperate sorties undertaken by the bold and hardy soldiers of the garrison. In one of these sallies Robert himself engaged in single combat with a stalwart knight, clad in armour, and, with face concealed, like his own, by the vizor of his helmet. Both were valiant and well skilled in the use of their weapons; but, after a fierce encounter, Robert wounded his antagonist in the arm, and threw him from his horse. In the voice of the overthrown foeman he recognised his father, and immediately alighting he assisted him to rise, placed him in the saddle, and allowed him freely to depart on his own charger. The king immediately afterwards relinquished the siege in despair, and retired to Rouen, where a new reconciliation was effected through the agency of the queen, some bishops and a number of Norman nobles, and Philippe was again destined to see his hopes of a permanent alienation of the fief of Normandy from the kingdom of England blighted. The friendly intercourse of William and his son, it is true, was never cordial, and it endured but for a brief period, ere the latter abandoned his parent's side a third, and, as it proved, a last time; but the opportunity for acquiring independence, by immediate and energetic action, was lost, and the French king, seeing that no dependence was to be placed on the prince's stability of purpose, does not seem to have afforded him any subsequent countenance or support.

William, there is little doubt, would have endeavoured to wreak immediate vengeance on the head of the French king for the numerous acts of insidious hostility for which he stood indebted to that monarch, but that new revolts and disquietudes demanded his instant presence in England, where the authority of his deputies and his own rule were set at nought and endangered, for about the hundredth time, by the oppressed and conquered, but not yet spirit-broken Saxons, assisted by some of the king's foreign mercenaries and Norman soldiers—to whom the rigorous laws of the Conquest had become intolerably odious—and encouraged by the promise of aid from Norway and Denmark. He was engaged for a long time in the re-establishment of peace among his refractory subjects; but, still cherishing his animosity against Philippe, no sooner did he find himself at leisure, than accompanied by his sons William and Henry, and taking with him “a mighty mass of money fitted for some great attempt,” he passed over to Normandy, followed by the deep and bitter curses of the English people, and made preparations for new hostilities. The avowed pretext for this warlike movement was the recovery of the county of Vexin, situated between the rivers Epte and Oise, which, after having been ceded to Robert *le Diable* by King Henry I., had been dismembered from Normandy, and united once more to France, during

the long troubles which marked the minority of the Bastard :—the ulterior, but latent, object of the Conqueror, calculating the resources which he took with him from England, may be suspected to have had reference to the crown of his suzerain. Whatever his real designs, however, were, he did not at once proceed to extremities, but entered into negotiations with the French king concerning the disputed territory, which he claimed as his right. While matters were thus in progress, William was reposing at Rouen, where, by the advice of his physicians, he kept his bed, in order, by the strictest dietary regimen, to reduce the excessive corpulency which rendered him incapable of any fatiguing exertion. Philippe, hearing of this, said one day in jest to his courtiers, “By my faith, the King of England is long lying-in; there will no doubt be a ceremonious churching after his delivery.” This speech was reported to William, and it stung his pride and awakened all his hatred. He swore by the greatest oaths—by the splendour and the nativity of God—that he would be churched in Nôtre Dame de Paris, with ten thousand lances for tapers.

Accordingly, in the month of July, 1087, he assembled his forces, and resuming all his wonted activity, entered France by the territory to which he had laid claim. The corn was now ready for the sickle, the clustering grapes were ripening on the vines, and the trees were laden with fruit. William commanded that every thing in his route should be laid waste. His cavalry were marched through the corn-fields, his soldiers were ordered to tear up the vines by the roots, and to cut down all the fruit trees;—instructions which were readily obeyed by his ruthless host, whose best pastime was cruelty and mischief. The first town which he reached was Mantes, on the banks of the Seine, which, being captured, was given to the flames. The king, insatiate of vengeance for the insult he had received, went in person to the scene of conflagration to feast his eyes with the terrible sight, and to urge on his soldiers to make the destruction complete, so that neither cottage nor mansion, church nor monastery, might be spared. As he rode over portion of the ruins, however, his horse put his fore-feet upon some burning embers, which causing it to swerve and plunge violently, the bulky king was thrown on the pommel of the saddle, and grievously bruised. He dismounted, and was carried sick to Rouen, whence he was removed at his own request to the monastery of St. Gervais, without the walls, as he was unable to bear the noise within the city. Here he languished for six weeks, during which the terrors of approaching death awakened in his mind some remorse for the many cruelties he had inflicted. He sent money to Mantes to rebuild the churches he had burned; to the convents and the poor clergy of England he remitted also much treasure, to purchase, according to the metrical chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, remission “for all the robberies” he had there committed, and he directed that all his Saxon and Norman state prisoners should be set at liberty.

The scene of his death presents a melancholy spectacle of the consummation

of human ambition and vanity. The moment he had made declaration of his last will, by which he bequeathed his ducal coronet of Normandy to his eldest son Robert, who was still in exile, the crown of England to his second son, William, and five thousand pounds weight of silver to Henry, his youngest son, his dutiful children deserted his bedside—Henry to receive his portion in money from the treasury, and William Rufus to embark for England, in order to secure the throne of that kingdom. The Norman died about sunrise on the morning of the 9th or 10th of September 1087, and almost before his last sigh had been breathed, the knights, priests and doctors, who had passed the night near him, put on their spurs, mounted their horses, and galloped to their several homes to look after their property and possessions, as a precaution against any confusion which might ensue through a disputed succession. The servants and vassals of inferior rank who remained, carried off the arms, the silver vessels, the royal dresses, the linen and other moveables from the palace, and fled likewise, leaving the corpse of the great



conqueror of England on the bare boards of the floor, where it lay, almost naked, from six in the morning till nine. The archbishop of Rouen and a number of the clergy at length assembled in the death-chamber, and after praying for the soul of the deceased, directed that it should be conveyed to Caen, and buried in the church of St. Stephen, which William had built and endowed ; but no one offered to take charge of the obsequies, or to honour the funeral by his presence. Eventually a poor knight, named Herluin,

"through kindness of feeling and the love of God," took upon himself the trouble and expense. The body was conveyed in a waggon to the banks of the Seine, thence in a barge to Caen; and, being delivered to the monks of St. Stephen's, was taken to the church to be interred. Even here however indignity awaited it. When the mass was finished, and the bishop of Evreux had pronounced the funeral oration, and the body was about to be lowered into the grave, a man stepped forth from amid the crowd of spectators and exclaimed in a loud voice, "Bishop, the man whom you have praised was a robber; the ground on which we are standing is mine, and is the site on which my father's house once stood. William took it from me by violence, to build thereon this church. I neither sold, nor mortgaged it, nor have I granted or forfeited it. It is my right, and I reclaim it. In the name of God I forbid you to lay the body of the spoiler therein, or to cover it with my glebe." This bold man was Asselin Fitz-Arthur, the truth of whose words was confirmed by all present; and, after a brief parley, the clergy present paid the claimant sixty sols (shillings) for the grave, engaging at the same time to procure for him the value of the rest of his land. The corpse, dressed in regal robes, but without a coffin, was then lowered into the grave, which was constructed of masonry; but this being found too narrow, it became necessary to thrust down the body, which caused it to burst. Incense and perfumes were burned in abundance to overcome the stench that arose, but in vain, and priests and people hurried away from the church in disgust.

The death of William relieved Philippe from his greatest source of anxiety. Normandy, in conformity with his wishes, was separated from England, and the fierce disputes and unnatural wars of the three sons of the conqueror, which almost immediately followed, prevented them from attempting to pursue the quarrel of their father. The French king relapsed, therefore, into his accustomed indolence and debauchery; and, having become tired of his queen Bertha of Friesland, notwithstanding that she was the mother of three children by him, he cast her off, and after divorcing her, sent her to languish in confinement in the castle of Montreuil. His assumed reason for this repudiation was that his wife stood related to him within the prohibited degrees; but the real cause appears to have been that he had become enamoured of the person or the fortune of Emma, the daughter of Roger, brother of the celebrated Robert Guiscard, Duke of Sicily. This lady's hand he demanded in marriage, and the proffered terms being accepted, Emma was despatched with a large retinue to Paris; but before her arrival the fickle and voluptuous king had again changed his mind. He had become acquainted with Bertrade, the beautiful daughter of Simon de Montfort, third wife of Foulques, surnamed *le Réchin* (the morose), Count of Anjou, a woman of considerable talent, of extreme levity, and of strong ambition. This lady, it is said, had been procured in marriage by Foulques while he had yet two wives living, through the agency of the

unscrupulous Robert *Courte-Heuse* of Normandy, who, by bribes and menaces, had prevailed on the Count of Evreux, her uncle and guardian, to consent to so questionable an alliance. Bertrade, however, was by no means pleased with the match, and, on receiving overtures from the king, at once embraced his proposals, and found means to escape from the vigilance of her husband at Tours, whence she hastened to throw herself into the arms of Philippe at Orleans. The nuptials of the adulterers were celebrated by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, half brother of William, the late king of England : but, though thus sanctioned, both the clergy and the nobles murmured at what they could not but consider a foul act of treachery, not only towards the Count of Anjou, but towards the Princess Emma, who had been so wantonly deceived and derided by her betrothed. The church alone, however, with which the king had never been effectually reconciled, on account of his continued disregard of its claims to exclusive privileges and untaxable possessions, seems to have practically interfered to remove the scandal from the throne. The Pope, Urban II., demanded, and indeed pronounced the dissolution of the marriage, and when Philippe resented this affront by ravaging the lands of Ives, Bishop of Chartres, who had published the papal decree in his diocese, Urban declared, through the Archbishop of Lyons, his legate, that a new Ahab and Jezebel had arisen, who were seeking to overthrow the altars of the Most High, and to put his prophets to the sword. A sentence of excommunication speedily followed ; but when the king, pretending obedience, in order to avert the consequences, laid aside his crown and royal robes, he obtained ready absolution. Soon afterwards the divorced queen Bertha died, and as Emma of Sicily had already found a husband in the Count of Auvergne, Philippe renewed his intercourse with Bertrade—who meanwhile had been reconciled to her former lord, and now again deserted him ; but the priests were still inexorable, and on this occasion, after a brief contest of words, their threats induced him, in the year 1105, to attend an ecclesiastical assembly, and there, in the cold month of December, to appear as a penitent, barefooted, and bareheaded and to take an oath “that he would, from that time, separate himself from Bertrade altogether,” and she, on her part, took a similar oath to abstain from all future converse with the king. How well this oath was observed may be gathered from the fact, that, in the year 1106, at which period the beautiful wanton was again living with her first husband, Philippe paid a visit to the Count of Anjou at the castle of Angers, and was permitted to sit by the side of Bertrade, while Foulques contented himself with sitting at her feet.

In the meantime, a question had arisen, which, for several centuries, not only exercised a powerful influence over France, but throughout Europe and the East. At the moment when Phillipe was engaged disputing with the church, respecting his marriage with Bertrade, his subjects were discussing the affairs of the Holy Land, and preparing for the first crusade. The taste for pilgrimages which had sprung up has been spoken of before. This had

now grown into a fashion ; and instead of being discouraged by the Arabs, or Saracens, as they were called, who had obtained possession of Palestine in the tenth century, the resort of devout christians to the sepulchres of the saints and martyrs was rather promoted and facilitated by them, as it had been by the Greek Emperors, for the sake of a small tax which was imposed upon every pilgrim. This good understanding subsisted for upwards of a century ; and Christian and Mahomedan, however they despised each other's creed ; sought not to molest or interfere with each other as men. Towards the end of the eleventh century, however, the Turks, issuing from their native wilds beyond Mount Caucasus, subverted the power of the Saracens, and set up an intolerable despotism in its stead. A savage and unlettered race, proud, cruel, and fierce, without respect for anything but their own dogmas, these conquerors insisted upon the payment of an excessive tribute by every person who should enter the gates of Jerusalem ; the consequence of which was that many of the humbler sort were compelled to remain without the walls, and to return, or perish where they were, without accomplishing the object of their mission. Those even who were allowed to pass the sacred gates, found themselves constantly subjected to pillage, insult, and ill-usage. Often, it is said, a number of them were seized and thrown into dungeons, until their friends and fellow-christians should redeem them from captivity, by the payment of an exorbitant ransom ; and such as were not redeemed were exposed to martyrdom, in order that their fate might operate to prevent mercenary obstinacy in the beholders. Nay, the Turks are said to have frequently perpetrated their brutalities from mere wantonness. While the christians were performing their rites within the temple, the rude warriors from the banks of the Caspian, in their dresses of skin, and with clattering arms, would force their way into the churches, seat themselves upon the altars, overturn the sacred vessels, and mock the officiating priests by plucking their beards and hair.

These evils had long been complained of, when Gregory VII. endeavoured to form a league among the various princes of Christendom, for the purpose of rescuing the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidels ; and he had already obtained the promise of a large army, when he became involved in a fierce quarrel with the Emperor Henry IV. of Germany, which occupied him during the remainder of his Pontificate. What the Pope failed to accomplish, however, was not long afterwards effected by a humbler instrument—a poor monk of Amiens in Picardy, called Peter the Hermit. This man, who is represented as of mean stature and appearance, but insinuating address and great eloquence, had been with others to Jerusalem, and returned, deeply affected with the indignities to which the faithful were exposed. While yet in the Holy land, indeed, he seems to have conceived the project of a crusade, and his design is said to have been strengthened by a vision, with which he was favoured in the church of the Resurrection, where, sleeping one night on the pavement, our Lord appeared to him

and said "Arise, Peter! and do that which has been indicated to thee." He hastened to Rome, taking letters with him from the Patriarch of the Holy city, and, urging upon Urban II. the duty of protecting the pilgrims and penitents who thronged to the tomb of the Redeemer, to throw off the burden of their sins at the foot of Mount Calvary, prevailed upon the Pontiff to adopt his views and support him to the utmost. Accordingly papal rescripts were addressed to all the sovereigns of Europe, representing the deplorable state of Palestine, and exhorting all princes and potentates to muster their forces and combine for the service of the christian religion, and the extirpation of infidelity. Peter himself was appointed the agent of this mission; and his activity, enthusiasm and eloquence, together with the reputed sanctity of his life, drew around him great multitudes wheresoever he appeared, while the novelty and daring of the enterprise he advocated—assorting, as it did so entirely with the chivalrous spirit and superstitious notions of the age—won him proselytes and supporters in every rank and class. The serf in the field, the baron in his castle, the prince in his court, and the citizen and merchant in the various towns and communities



of Christendom, responded at once and heartily to the call of the pious preacher, and expressed their readiness to embark in the good work to which they were called—the holy war. In journeying from place to place,

Peter was followed and met by crowds who thronged around and did homage to him, subjecting themselves to the severest inconvenience to obtain a glance at him, kissing the hem of his garments, and thinking themselves blessed above the condition of mortals if they could but obtain a hair from the tail or mane of the donkey on which he was mounted.

This necessary ferment having been excited, Urban convoked a great council at Clermont in 1095, which was attended by such an immense host of priests and laymen, from France, Italy and Germany, and even by ambassadors from Constantinople, that the town was too small to contain the concourse, and they were consequently compelled to encamp without the walls, during the seven days that the deliberations of the assembly lasted. The pope seems to have been the last person to address the multitude. He urged upon his hearers the necessity of laying aside all meaner considerations until the Holy Land should be freed from the rule of the pagan usurpers. He promised, to all who should lend their aid in the cause, a full remission of their sins, however heinous, and a portion in the bliss of Heaven. "Gird on your swords," he then exclaimed, addressing the surrounding chiefs and warriors, "it is your part, ye men of valour, to fight, and ours to pray. Unite under the standard of Jesus Christ. For Him it will be your glory to die, fighting under the walls of that city, in sight of which He died for you. If you succeed, you will be enriched with the spoil of the infidels; if you die, you shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away. Go, repeat at home what you have heard here. Inspire all people with the noble ambition of fighting for the cross of Christ, and of conquering Jerusalem from the enemies of our God." The assembly, wrought to frenzy by the strange scene in which they had become actors, and by the energetic appeal made to their passions and their faith by the head of the church, responded, as with one voice, "It is the will of God!—It is the will of God!" Thousands enrolled themselves on the instant in the army of the Lord, and in testimony of their enlistment, assumed a badge of red cloth, cut in the shape of a cross, which was worn on the shoulder. Such was the general eagerness to procure this symbol, that some of the princes present cut up their robes in order to furnish a supply. From this emblem of the cross it was that the undertaking derived its name of Crusade, the appellation by which all similar expeditions have since been called.

The result has been frequently described. From every part of Europe flocked crowds to engage in the war for the recovery of Palestine. Monks quitted their cells, debtors obtained their release from prison, husbands forsook their wives, parents deserted their children, and children abandoned their aged parents. Not less, it is believed, than half a million of men of all ages and degrees at this time assumed the cross, impelled by the various motives of religion, licentiousness, idleness, a love of plunder, and a thirst for military renown. The humbler sort sold all that they possessed to purchase

equipments; the nobles mortgaged their lands, and princes granted to many towns and cities a release from the obnoxious feudal claims to which they had been subjected, on condition of their furnishing a supply of ready money for the expenses of the enterprise. Robert of Normandy, the eldest son of the Conqueror mortgaged his dukedom to his brother William Rufus for barely enough to purchase an outfit for himself and his followers; and Herpin Count of Bourges, sold the fee of his patrimony to King Philippe for sixty thousand sous of gold. Thus, at the very outset, the king and people reaped advantages of the most important description from the fanaticism, which, to use the expressive language of the princess-historian, Anna Comnena, "seemed to have loosened all Europe from its foundations, and prepared to precipitate it upon Asia."

Not one king enrolled himself in the ranks of the first crusade; but a multitude of powerful nobles and knights were engaged, together with priests and inferior leaders, sufficiently numerous of themselves to have formed an army; and the mass of the common people was greater than, in all probability, had ever before been mustered for the accomplishment of one object. The condition of the general body of the array however was far from being such as would have satisfied a skilful general. The various corps had no connexion with each other. The majority were undisciplined, unaccustomed to the use of arms and to long marches, and resembled a miscellaneous rabble rather than a host of warriors. Among the whole of those who first set forth, there were but *eight* horsemen; a circumstance which led to the observation of an historian that "it was no wonder a bird with such short wings, and so long a tail, should not be able to take a distant flight." Then, so ignorant and so superstitious were they, that, instead of making due provision for their march, they relied literally and implicitly upon the assurance of the Pope, that "no accidents or dangers could attend them on their march; for that Jesus, in whose service they had volunteered would protect and preserve them, if they would but devoutly trust in him."

So impatient were the crusaders to reach the scene of action, that each band, the moment its inadequate preparations were completed, set out, without waiting for more dilatory comrades, towards the far east. Walter *Sans Avoir*, (the Penniless), a Burgundian of noble birth, but whose name expresses his fortune, led the crowd which first passed the Rhine; and succeeded, after traversing Bavaria, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria, in reaching the appointed general rendezvous beneath the walls of Constantinople. He was followed a few weeks after by Peter the Hermit, at the head of a similar rabble; a little later by a fanatical German monk, named Gotteschalk, and finally by a Count from the lower Rhine, named Emmicho; each bringing up a horde of barbarians more uncivilized, if possible, than the Turks against whom they had been set in motion. The hardships of their march had already induced many to turn back, and many had perished of hunger and privation by the way. Others had been attacked and slaughtered by

the Austrians, Hungarians, and Bulgarians, on account of the ravages, excesses and licentiousness which had been perpetrated on the march; so that not more than a third of the original muster assembled in the Greek territory. These, as speedily as possible, were shipped across the Bosphorus by the Emperor Alexius; and Walter *Sans Avoir*, while advancing against Nicæa, the capital of the Seldjook Turks, was attacked by the Sultan Soliman, and his followers were nearly exterminated. The number which, up to this period, had perished, to say nothing of deserters—a large portion of the whole—has been estimated at not less than three hundred thousand persons. The remnant, consisting of about three thousand men, including Peter the Hermit, found refuge in an old ruined fortress, where they were generously provided with provisions and other necessities by the Greeks, until succour reached them from Constantinople.

The better disciplined and more warlike class of pilgrims assembled by Duke Robert of Normandy, Count Robert of Flanders, Hugh of Vermandois, the brother of the French king, Stephen of Chartres, Raymond de St. Gilles of Toulouse, Hugh de St. Paul, Baldwin de Burgh, and others, did not take their departure till the year 1096; and then, the expedition was placed under the command of Godfrey de Bouillon, Duke of Lorraine, who, instead of pursuing the route taken by the first adventurers, after marching through Italy, and enlisting in his ranks Bohemond Prince of Tarentum, his nephew Tancred, and a number of Normans from Sicily, caused the majority of his forces to be transported to the rendezvous by sea.

At sight of this second host, consisting of a hundred thousand cavaliers, and about six hundred thousand footmen, Alexius Comnena became alarmed. When he had solicited aid from the Princes of Europe against the Turks he had no conception of being inundated with a mass of iron-clad troopers, capable of overrunning his Empire, and not only subjecting his enemies, but establishing themselves as conquerors in his own territory. He at first, therefore, refused a passage into Asia to the Crusaders; and when, at last, he was induced, partly by threats and partly by entreaty, to concede this point, he exacted from the chiefs of the expedition an oath that they would do homage, and render tribute, to him for all such lands as they should recover from the infidels.

It was not till the month of May 1097, that the army of the Cross resumed its march. On the 15th of that month it arrived beneath the walls of Nicæa, which city was immediately invested. The siege lasted about six weeks, and then, instead of being surrendered to the real captors, its keys were delivered to Alexius, and the place thus saved from pillage—the hope of which had formed probably the sole inducement for the attack. Henceforward the crusaders marched and acted together with some ill-will; and disorders among the troops, and altercations between the chiefs, became frequent. Every leader advanced with his followers apart; and this, besides fostering the rankling spirit which had arisen among the different divisions

of the army, afforded advantages to the Turks which they from time to time were enabled signally to profit by, hovering as they constantly did with a flying army of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand men around the invaders, prepared for a desultory or a general attack, as opportunities for either might occur. In these encounters, whatever might be the issue of the engagement, the christians were sure to sustain heavy losses; and more than once the fate of the whole expedition was placed in imminent jeopardy. In the valley of Dodorgonhi, in Phrygia, Bohemond and his Sicilian Normans being in advance of the army, were suddenly surrounded and attacked by the innumerable squadrons of Soliman, and, but for the timely arrival of the main body during the conflict they must have been cut off to a man. When the battle, however, became general, the sultan, as was his rule in that species of warfare, fled from the field. This fight was dignified by the crusaders with the name of the victory of Dorylæum; and, notwithstanding its comparative insignificance, it appears to have had the important effect of preventing any similar attack from the Turks during the remainder of the march. But the moment this enemy withdrew, other foes, not less formidable, appeared. The ravages of hunger and disease commenced immediately those of war ceased; and men and horses sunk and perished in large numbers, fatigued and famished beneath the weight of their arms and accoutrements, under the broiling sun to which they were now first exposed. The quarrels of the chiefs, too, became more serious and more determined from day to day as the army moved on, till, on reaching Tarsus, an open rupture occurred between two of the leaders, which led to the speedy withdrawal of one from the expedition. Tancred, Bohemond's nephew, having planted his banner on the walls of the city to which he had lain siege, had the mortification to see it plucked thence by Baldwin, a brother of Godfrey of Bouillon, and thrown to the earth at the foot of the rampart, in order that the ensign of Lorraine might take precedence of that of Normandy. A desperate fray ensued, in which several persons were killed on each side; and it was only by the strong restraint interposed by some of the more reasonable among the commanders that the whole army were prevented from engaging in the feud as partisans, and thus ensuring general destruction by a civil war of the worst character. A short time afterwards, Baldwin, having pushed across the Euphrates, made an easy conquest of the country of Edessa and Samosata, where, forgetful of his oath for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, he halted from his toils, and sought with his followers to establish a dominion for themselves.

At length the main body, greatly wasted in numbers, and much disorganised by dissension, reached Antioch, and commenced a siege which was vigorously sustained by the inhabitants for nine months. Such were the hardships endured during this protracted period, from disease, heat, want of water, and dearth of provisions, that, at the end of it, but two thousand horses are said to have remained of all that had been brought from Europe,

or captured by the way ; and when it was ascertained that an Emir, called Kerboga, was advancing by forced marches, with an overwhelming army, to the relief of the city, such was the consternation occasioned among the Christians that even the heart of William of Melun—surnamed the Carpenter, for the deadly execution he had dealt upon the heads and limbs of the enemy with his battle-axe—failed him ; and he fled by night, taking with him Peter the hermit—the parent of the crusade, the man who had been the chief instrument of all the mischief and misfortune that had befallen. Messengers, however, were promptly dispatched after the fugitives, and they were brought back by force ; but the incident was necessarily not without scandal to the whole army. Fortunately, a short time afterwards, and just three days before the arrival of the dreaded Turks, a Christian resident within the city delivered the place up to Bohemond ; and the crusaders, from being besiegers, became in turn the besieged. To their disgrace it is related that, on obtaining possession of Antioch, they put all the inhabitants to the sword—sparing neither sex nor age—Christian, Jew, nor Moslem.

During the blockade that ensued a horrible famine raged within the walls, and man and beast died in great multitudes. So severe was this dearth that the noblest of those present were unable to obtain provisions ; and the Count of Flanders was so pressed by hunger, as to have a necessity for begging in the streets for a bit of bread. New desertions followed, among which was that of Stephen of Chartres, who with several friends, let themselves down from the ramparts at night by means of cords, and received for their exploit the derisive surname of *rope dancers*, in allusion to the instrument of their escape. Raymond of Toulouse, at this time, had recourse to an expedient for reanimating the drooping courage of the soldiers. At his instigation, Barthèlemy, a Provençal priest, declared that he had been informed in a vision that, in a certain church of Antioch, the head of the lance with which the side of our Lord had been pierced upon the cross might still be found. A crowd instantly hastened to the spot, and, in the place indicated, an ancient lance-head, covered with rust, was speedily discovered. This, by the majority of the spectators, was regarded of course as a miraculous evidence of the satisfaction of the Deity ; but there being some present whom stern realities had rendered less credulous as to divine interposition in their favour, a second miracle was demanded for the confirmation of the first. Barthèlemy, with a devotion and heroism which would have graced a better purpose, undertook to satisfy all scruples ; and actually passed, as he was desired, between two long piles of blazing wood, and reappeared on the other side. He was so dreadfully scorched, however, that, a few days afterwards, he died in extreme agony in the tent of Count Raymond.

The possession of the relic and the example of the poor priest were not without their influence. The gates of the beleaguered city were thrown open, and the crusaders rushing forth, sustained by the apparition of St. George, St. Theodore and St. Maurice, who were distinctly seen in the van





Charlemagne inspecting the Schools.

by a number of the more enthusiastic devotees, the hostile army was entirely defeated and dispersed, and Antioch freed from all further apprehension. The city was assigned as an independent principality to Bohemond; and the army, again diminished in numbers through the secession of the Sicilian Normans, resumed its slow and toilsome march



towards Jerusalem—coasting along the arid sands upon the sea-shore, within sight of the Genoese galleys which carried their warlike stores and provisions.

It was not till the 7th of June 1099 that the invading army, reduced to about sixty thousand men, obtained a first glimpse of the heights of Golgotha; and in the meantime an entire revolution had taken place in the government of Palestine. The Turks, compelled to withdraw their garrisons from Syria and the holy cities for the defence of Asia Minor, had permitted the Arabs to recover their ancient rule; and, as the crusade had not been directed against the Saracens, the Caliph of Egypt sought to restore peace with the christians on the ancient terms. His ambassadors offered to Godfrey and his followers free access to Jerusalem, in bands of two or three hundred at a time, in order to pay their devotions at the shrine of the redeemer in peace; and that, for the future, pilgrims should be free to

come and depart without molestation or annoyance. Splendid presents, moreover, were tendered to the leaders of the crusade to induce them to enter into a permanent treaty of amity; but the Europeans, seeing that the object for which they had quitted their own land was well nigh accomplished, would listen to no terms but the unconditional surrender of the Holy City, and this being denied, Jerusalem was forthwith straitly blockaded.

The siege lasted thirty-seven days, at the end of which a definitive assault, led by Godfrey of Bouillon in person, and which raged for thirty-six hours, decided the war. A miracle seems to have been of great service even in this last struggle. Godfrey, seeing that his soldiers flagged through exhaustion, suddenly exclaimed to those around him that he could discern upon the Mount of Olives a warrior covered with resplendent arms, beckoning him forward. The battle cry of "St. George" then ran along the lines; new energy was inspired into the fainting combatants, rushing from a wooden turret, which had been rolled up to the walls of the city, over the ramparts, the crusaders penetrated into the streets and carried indiscriminate slaughter through Jerusalem. The massacre, notwithstanding that all resistance had ceased, was continued for three days—until indeed there is said to have remained not a single Mussulman alive. This ended, the fierce warriors laid aside their arms, cleansed their hands and garments from the gore in which they had been just dyed, and putting off their shoes, joined in a solemn procession as pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre! The christian residents of Jerusalem prostrated themselves as to a saint before old Peter the Hermit, and kissed the hem of his robe in token of gratitude for their deliverance from the rule of the pagans. Eight days after this strange ceremonial [23rd July, 1099] Godfrey was proclaimed King of Jerusalem in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The throne had been offered first to Robert of Normandy, and subsequently to the Count of Flanders; and it was only on their refusal that Godfrey would accept the honour. In token of his devotion, though not perhaps of his modesty, he assumed thenceforward a crown of thorns instead of a golden diadem.—The majority of the crusaders soon afterwards set out on their return to Europe, leaving Godfrey, and Tancred of Sicily, to occupy and organise the newly conquered realm, with a retinue of scarcely more than five hundred knights. In the Assize of Jerusalem, which followed, the feudal laws were established throughout Palestine; and the monastic orders of Templars and Hospitallers were instituted. The first adoption, by Europeans, of armorial bearings and devices on their shields is said to have belonged to this period—the followers of each chief having been at a loss, during the siege of Antioch, to recognise their several leaders merely from their armour; but whether this be so or not, it is certain that at a long prior date, distinctive symbols were in common use among princes and nobles at least upon their standards and banners.

While these events had been proceeding at a distance, the King of France

was engaged in a series of petty but annoying hostilities with several of his refractory vassals, among whom the most distinguished were William Rufus, King of England, who acted as regent for his absent brother Robert in Normandy, and a bold and desperate baron, named Troussel, who held the seigniorship of Montlhéry. After a long, but unimportant struggle, Philippe, heartily tired of the fatigues imposed on him by the conduct of war in his own person, associated with him in his kingly office his eldest son by Bertha, his first wife, subsequently known as Louis VI. This prince, who had attained his twenty-first year, had already become a favourite among the French people by his intelligence and activity, which qualities, indeed, had procured for him the surname of *L'Eveillé* (the alert). He at once set vigorously to work to restore the royal authority, and with such success, that, within a year, the turbulent nobles by whom the country was infested as with banditti,—merchants and travellers being constantly plundered and stripped by them upon all the high roads—were brought into subjection, and some of them consigned to severe punishment. The first who felt the weight of his arms was Bouchard de Montmorency, a graceless vassal of the monks of St. Denis, who had pillaged the lands and seized the goods of his superiors, and retiring to his castle, had defied all the threats and censures of the church and the law. He next assailed the Count de Rouci who had treated with similar brutality and scorn the clergy of Rheims; and after reducing him, he turned to chastise Leon, the castellan of Meun, who was a tenant of the Church of Orléans. This chief, Louis is said to have slain with his own hand in an encounter.

In 1106 he attacked the celebrated Tower of Montlhéry, of which the ruins still exist to attest the strength and the extent of the fortress; and after a siege he succeeded in so far humiliating Guy Troussel, one of the *rope dancers* of Antioch, who, on his return from the crusade, had collected a daring band around him, and scoured the country almost to the gates of Paris, as to make the brigand sue for peace, and in token of submission bestow his daughter in marriage on a son of Philippe and Bertrade, to whom, at the same time, he gave his paternal castle as a marriage portion. The last of the domestic wars in which the Prince was engaged, during the life time of the old king, was directed against Rochefort and the district of Pomponne. In this instance Louis himself appears to have been the aggressor. He had been affianced in the year 1104 to Lucienne, daughter of the Count de Rochefort; but, on pretence that the lady was too young for his bride, he, three years afterwards, procured from the Pope a dissolution of the contract, and a formal divorce was accordingly pronounced by the council of Troyes. The Count immediately took arms to avenge the insult, and being joined by Thibaud, Count of Chartres and Lord of Brie, mustered a formidable army, and menaced the royal domain. Louis, however, by his skill and promptitude, succeeded in quelling the insurrection by the capture of his chief opponent's castle, at the siege of which he wrought in person as a simple warrior, and, in

the assault by which it was taken, he was the first to descend the fosse and to mount the breach. His courage and hardihood in these several enterprises procured for him the title of the *Battler*—the most valuable which, in that age of lawless violence, could have been bestowed upon a monarch who sought to obtain the respect of his subjects for his person or the laws he was called on to administer. In his latter years, in consequence of corpulency, he acquired the surname of *Le Gros*, (the fat) by which he is most generally known in history; but this equivocal distinction did not attach to him, or impede his efforts, during the better and greater part of his life.

The closing years of the reign of Philippe were fully as inglorious, as far as he was personally concerned, as those which had preceded. He is even said to have endeavoured to prevail upon Henry I. of England to detain his son Louis, then on a visit to that king for the purpose of assisting at his coronation, and receiving at his hands the honour of knighthood, in perpetual captivity, in order that the crown of France might be transferred to the brow of one of the sons of Bertrade, who still retained her influence over her voluptuous paramour: but as Philippe, on being taxed with it, disavowed and denounced this treacherous and unnatural act, it may be charitably presumed that the royal signet had been clandestinely used by Bertrade to authenticate a private forgery of her own. Louis himself seems to have conceived that this was the case; and he, in revenge, endeavoured to procure the assassination of his step-mother. The attempt however failed, and was retorted on himself—a slow poison being administered to him under the instructions of Bertrade, which, but for a powerful and timely antidote applied by the Prince's Arab physician, must have proved fatal. Louis recovered, but his cheeks remained colourless for the rest of his life. Gluttony, debauchery, and indolence had reduced the king's mind and body to premature decay; and so excessive was his corpulency at the age of fifty-seven that he was scarcely able to move. It was at this time that he was attacked by the disorder which proved fatal to him. On the first symptoms of approaching death he assumed the habit of a Benedictine monk, and in order to evince the sincerity of his penitence for the life of crime and vice which he had led, he forbade that his remains should be interred in any of the royal sepulchres, but directed that they might be deposited at Fleury on the Loire, in the church of St. Benedict, "that merciful saint," according to his dying words, "who, full of benignity, offers a favourable reception to all sinners who seek to reconcile themselves with God." He expired at Melun on the 29th of July 1108, after a reign of forty-eight years.

The extent of the actual realm of France, at the time Louis VI. ascended the throne, was not more than would be occupied by a square of about forty leagues in length, by thirty in breadth, and the whole resources of the monarch depended upon the revenues drawn from Paris, Orleans, Etampes, Melun and Compiègne; but Louis, who seems to have early conceived the idea of consolidating the power of the crown by the reduction of the great

vassals was not to be discouraged by trifling obstacles. He knew that the Barons, who had impoverished the royal exchequer, and diminished the kingly power, however invincible when banded together, might be easily defeated and ruined in detail, and thus accordingly he resolved to attack and subjugate them. He hastened to celebrate his coronation immediately upon the death of his father; and, that ceremony over, he took the field at once against the barons of Rochefort, of Crècy, and of Puiset, who had recommenced the old system of pillage upon the monks, the burgesses of small towns, and the inhabitants of villages, who, being unable to defend themselves, were subjected to the severest hardships and the most wanton spoliation. This brigandage, indeed, was almost universal throughout France, and had been so from the time of Charles the Bald; but as no general law could put an end to it, and the king saw that it would be imprudent to declare war against every known delinquent, and thus arm against him three-fourths of his nominal vassals at once, he cautiously selected the objects of his resentment, according to his means; and completed the punishment of one before denouncing the iniquities of another. Yet, notwithstanding the art which Louis used to conceal his purpose, his design seems to have been penetrated at the very commencement of his reign; and Eudes, lord of Corbeil, one of the most daring and turbulent of the marauding feudatories, sought to organise an extensive conspiracy for the avowed purpose of dethroning the king. When this bold leader had buckled on his armour, before mounting his war-horse in the great court of his castle, being about to conduct his followers forth to the aid of his confederates, he is reported to have exclaimed to his countess, as she handed him his lance, "You place this weapon, my sweet, in the hands of a count. It shall be restored to you by the hands of a king." The combination failed however. Louis, who had been apprised of his danger, attacked the conspirators unawares, and the Count of Corbeil, instead of acquiring the crown—the object of his ambition—was killed in a sudden onset, on the very day in which he had uttered his proud and futile vaunt; and his comrades, awed by his fate, and by the energy of the king, purchased their lives by timely submission. The Lord of Puiset was the last to hold out against the royal authority; and the castle of that name, after having been captured and retaken two or three several times, was finally razed to the ground. It ought to be remarked that in these contests the *people*, properly so called, were, for the first time in the history of France, immediately interested. They had been the chief sufferers from the depredations committed by the unprincipled seigneurs; and the relief afforded by the destruction of the power of the nobles was greater to them than even to the king. "It was not therefore," according to M. Henri Martin, "at the head of an army of knights and archers alone that the king marched to assail the feudal castles of his domestic enemies; but troops of another kind were enrolled beneath his banners. The peasants from the ecclesiastic domains, which

had been incessantly exposed to ravage, took arms as volunteers, and mustering in parochial communities, followed their curates to the war. A poor village priest, at the head of an intrepid band of these rustics, was the first to begin the destruction of the palissades of Puiset, and to penetrate within the castle walls, where even the men at arms hesitated for a moment to follow him." The towns-people also came forward liberally with their aid in purse and person; and contributed thus to begin the long struggle for personal freedom, and for the establishment of the dominion of the law as opposed to feudalism, which cannot be said to have ceased throughout Europe, even in the nineteenth century. The king, it is needless to add, secured a large share of ill-will to his person and rule from his liege dukes, and counts, and barons, by accepting such "vile and base" assistance; but finding themselves unable to withstand the power they deprecated, the nobles were compelled to make their peace as they best might; and even to rally around the throne with more than their wonted loyalty, in order to exclude as much as possible from the consideration of the government that popular influence which they had so much reason to dread.

These local disturbances had not been suppressed, ere a dispute arose between the Kings of France and England, which may be regarded as the prelude to the long wars which subsequently desolated each of the rival kingdoms, and which for many ages left a portion of the animosity they engendered to rankle in the national spirit of either country. William Rufus had been killed by accident while hunting in the New forest, near Winchester, while Duke Robert, his eldest brother, was yet at a distance from Normandy on his way back from the conquest of Jerusalem. Had he been at hand to maintain his right, he might no doubt have secured the throne; but in his absence his claim was set aside in favour of his younger brother Henry I., surnamed *Beau-clerc*, who mounted the throne without opposition, and had his *election*, as it was called, confirmed in a general assembly of the Norman barons. When acquainted with this second disinheritor, Robert, who was in Sicily, did not press forward with diligence to assert his birthright, but remained for nearly twelve months indulging himself in the pleasures to which he was attached, and paying court to Sibylla the wealthy heiress of the Italian Count of Conversano, whose fortune he knew would at least maintain him in the ease and indolence which he loved perhaps better than pomp or power. His reappearance in Normandy was hailed with enthusiasm by his subjects; and as he was invited by several of the disaffected Anglo-Normans, and his own people prompted him to the enterprise, he some time afterwards made formidable preparations for a second conquest of England. At last he landed an army at Portsmouth; but his easy good-nature being speedily wrought upon by his brother, who felt the sceptre trembling in his hand, a peace was concluded between the princes, which guaranteed Normandy, and a yearly pension of three thousand marks from the English exchequer, to Robert, and

the throne of England in full inheritance to its present occupant. This, on the part of Henry, appears, nevertheless, to have been but a feigned reconciliation to afford time for the maturing of deeper designs. He soon found occasion to quarrel with Robert, and to deprive him of his pension; and when the latter endeavoured to retaliate by offering a refuge to some of his brother's rebellious vassals, the English king declared an implacable war against him; and transporting an army of Anglo-Saxons, whom he had attached to him by various artifices, to Normandy, he declared himself the protector of that province, proclaiming as his object a mere redress of the grievances under which the country laboured through the misgovernment of the duke. Normandy in truth was and had been long misgoverned. Robert was never fit for a ruler. He was, according to the ancient chroniclers, "too trusting and merciful" for his age; and his generosity was more fatal to him than the vices and defects which stained his character. His beautiful bride Sibylla died in 1102, and immediately afterwards he relapsed into all the irregularities which had marked his conduct during the life of his father. His court was then again thronged with vagabond jongleurs, abandoned women and rapacious favourites, who not only induced him to squander his revenues, and to fleece his subjects, but even plundered him in his own house and person. "On one occasion," it is related, "some ecclesiastics sent to treat with him by his brother Henry found him at Carentan, unable to rise, because the mimes and prostitutes whom he retained in his suite had robbed him of his clothes, while he slept, overpowered with wine; and it was not till afternoon that he was able to repair to the church, wither the ambassadors had retired, for want of boots and breeches." The disorders which had arisen in consequence of this gross negligence and universal levity, afforded facilities to Henry, of which he did not hesitate to avail himself; and, after the refusal of Robert to cede Normandy in exchange for a sum of money or an annual pension, a fierce war was commenced between the brothers, which terminated in the battle of Tinchebray, fought on the 28th of September 1106, where Robert was defeated and taken prisoner. He was subsequently sent to England and confined in Cardiff castle, where, on the failure of an attempt to make his escape, he was deprived of sight, by the application of a copper basin made red-hot, and held over his eyes till their balls were seared and destroyed. For this, as for many other misfortunes, he was indebted to the remorseless cruelty of his unnatural brother Henry. He died in his captivity in the year 1135, having sustained imprisonment for nine-and-twenty years, twenty-eight of which he had passed in utter darkness.

Robert, at the time of his defeat, had an only son, the issue of his marriage with the fair Sibylla, then under five years old. Henry obtained possession of the child at Falaise, soon after he had taken the father, but having consigned him, till a more fit opportunity for the developement of his ulterior designs, to the custody of Hélie de St. Saens, a Norman noble, that chief, who had married an illegitimate daughter of Duke Robert, instead of

surrendering his charge when required to the inexorable king, his uncle, conducted him to the court of King Louis, who, feigning an interest in the orphan, adopted him, and brought him up in his palace as his own son. At a proper age he gave him horses and armour, according to the custom of the age; and, under the shadow of his guardianship and protection, made use of the lad's name to disturb the quietude of the English sovereign, and to dispossess him, apparently for the most sinister purpose, of the dukedom of Normandy, which he had subjugated. Neither the intrigues of Louis or of Henry can be distinctly traced through the devious course of unscrupulous ambition which each pursued, in order to acquire the inheritance of the young Prince William, called at first Fitz-Robert, but afterwards better known as *Longue-Épée*, (long sword); thus much, nevertheless, is certain, that, finding his own territory menaced, the French king formed a league with the Counts of Anjou and Flanders, and bound himself by an oath to secure to the youth, as soon as he should attain a proper age, investiture of Normandy. Before that period arrived, however, an open rupture had taken place between the two monarchs.

The castle of Gisors, situated on the river Epte, and forming an important frontier post between France and Normandy, had long been the cause of much jealousy, heart-burning and dispute between the rulers of the respective countries, who severally claimed the fortress as subject to their special jurisdiction. In order, however, to prevent future quarrels on this subject, it had been finally agreed between the claimants that if, at any time, the neutral baron who held the castle should cede its occupation to either party, the new lord should raze its fortifications within the space of forty days after obtaining possession. Henry, having eventually secured the post, omitted to fulfil the condition, and, when Louis insisted upon his acquiescence, prepared for war. Much time was wasted in fruitless negotiations upon the point; but in the year 1113 hostilities were commenced along the whole line of the Norman frontier, and Henry, attacked before he was perfectly prepared, sustained considerable loss in the capture of many important towns and castles. He was at the same time alarmed by a credible report that a number of the adherents of Duke Robert, his captive brother, had entered into a conspiracy against his life; and whether true or false, the rumour occasioned him such uneasiness and apprehension that for several years he never slept without a sword and buckler at his pillow.

The war, which was merely a series of petty sieges and desultory skirmishes, continued with various fortune to the principles for about six years. "The sufferers throughout," it has been said, "were the people of Normandy and the neighbouring countries, whose lands were wasted and houses burned; and the people of England, who were taxed and harried to furnish the money for Henry. As for the chief warriors, what with the impenetrable armour in which they now encased themselves, and a system of ransoming one another, and holding all knights, on whatever side they

fought, as forming part of a brotherhood, every member of which, except in certain predicaments, was to be treated with respect, they suffered little more than if they had been engaged in jousts and tournaments." An engagement which took place towards the termination of the war affords a characteristic specimen of the knightly encounters of the age.

On the 20th of August 1119, Louis, accompanied by four hundred, and Henry by five hundred knights, met, rather by accident than design, in the plain of Brenneville, a short distance from Noyon. Visors were instantly lowered, trumpets sounded, lances couched, and a charge made by the French cavaliers, headed by young William of Normandy, who, breaking through his uncle's first line of battle, penetrated to the spot where the king himself was stationed. William Crespigny, Count of Evreux, one of the followers of Fitz-Robert, attacked Henry in person, and dealt on his head two such furious blows with his sword, that the royal helmet was beaten flat upon its wearer's skull, which last however seems to have escaped without material injury. Louis, on his side, had nearly been captured by an English esquire, who, seizing the bridle of his horse, exclaimed, "The king is taken." The presence of mind and courage of the king saved him. He replied to his assailant, "Know you not that at the game of chess the king is never taken;" and at the same moment, raising his sword, he felled the boastful esquire to his feet. After a gallant contest the French were defeated, leaving the royal standard, and one hundred and forty knights in the hands of the victors. When the dead were counted they were found to amount to three persons! Louis, however, and the young Norman prince, had their horses killed under them, and were compelled to escape on foot; while Henry lost some blood in the conflict both at the mouth and nose. The French king in his flight got entangled in the labyrinths of a neighbouring forest, whence he was conducted by a peasant, to whom his rank was unknown, to a place of safety at Andelys. Such was the battle of Brenneville; which was followed by the display of a variety of chivalrous courtesies—the English sovereign sending to his brother monarch a splendidly caparisoned war horse, in lieu of that he had lost, and his eldest son William transmitting to his cousin of Normandy a similar present. The prisoners taken were honourably entertained by their captors, and duly dismissed on payment of the proper knightly ransoms.

The defeat of Louis rendered him eager for revenge, to attain which he had recourse once more to the aid of the ecclesiastics, and their troops of peasantry. The ancient traditions which survive in the plains of Burgundy and of Berry, and in the districts of Sens and Beauvais attest the cruelty of the ravages which ensued, and the deep fear and hatred which the predatory bands thus set on foot, inspired in the hearts of the population. Priests, and even Bishops, it is said, accompanied the marauding troops, and not unfrequently directed their operations. The mediation of Guy, formerly

archbishop of Vienne, but then recently elevated to the Papal chair, under the designation of Calixtus II., at last [A. D. 1120] put an end to a contest which had become merely a pretext on all sides for the most ruthless and atrocious brigandage. It was agreed, at the treaty of Gisors, that each king should restore the prisoners and places he had captured from the other, that the claims of William Fitz-Robert should no longer be recognised by Louis, and that William, called, after the manner of the Saxons, the *Atheling*, as being the eldest son of the English king, should be invested with the Duchy of Normandy, and should do homage for that Fief to the King of France as his suzerain.

Having thus settled his continental quarrels, Henry now hastened to return to England, from which he had been long absent. The fleet which was to convey him, his family and his followers from Barfleur, the place of embarkation, assembled at that place in November, on the 25th of which month all was in readiness for their departure. At the moment of reaching the beach, one Thomas Fitz-Stephen, presented himself before the king, requesting to be allowed to transport the royal person, in the *Blanche Nef*, (the White Ship) as his father had conducted William the Bastard, when he sailed from the same port for the conquest of England. The king, having made choice of his vessel, declined the proposal; but, not liking wholly to reject so humble and at the same time so loyal a petition, answered that he would confide to Fitz-Stephen the safety of his two sons, of his daughter, and all their attendants. Henry forthwith set sail; but the passengers of the *Blanche Nef*, consisting of Prince William, and his half-brother Richard, a young man of illegitimate birth; of the Lady Matilda, Countess of Perche, William's half-sister; of Richard Earl of Chester and his wife, the king's niece; her brother, the prince's tutor, and a host of gay young Norman and English nobles, to the number of one hundred and forty, eighteen being ladies of the first rank—amounting in all, with their respective attendants and the ship's crew, to not less than three hundred souls,—loitered on shore and upon the deck, drinking and feasting themselves and regaling the mariners, till "the men had drank out their wits and reason," and the shades of evening had gathered over the waters. The captain, nothing daunted, promised to overtake every ship that had sailed before him; and as soon as the moon had risen, he quitted his moorings and put out to sea. To increase the speed of his barque, the fifty skilful rowers by whom she was manned, plied the oar with all their vigour; and, Fitz-Stephen being at the helm, they held their course as gaily and as rapidly as their freight, emboldened with wine and wassail, could desire. In their eagerness however to get up with the king's ship, the crew of the *Blanche Nef* entangled their ship among some rocks lurking under the surface of the waves, at a place called Ras de Catte (now Ras de Catteville), when suddenly it struck on one of these with such violence that several of the timbers started, and the vessel instantly began to

fill. A cry of alarm and horror was raised simultaneously by all on board ; and this was heard by some of the other vessels already far out at sea ; but no one suspected the cause. The captain lowered a boat, and, hurrying the prince and some of his friends into it, advised them to row at once to shore and save themselves. As the sea was smooth, and the coast at no great distance, this would not have been difficult ; but recollecting, the moment after quitting the ship's side, that his beloved sister Matilda had not been rescued, and her shrieks for aid striking his ear, the prince ordered the rowers to put back and take her in. The return of the boat was the signal of a rush for life to all on board the foundering vessel ; and a minute after, the *Blanche Nef*, the boat, and all that they had held, were engulfed in the deep. Two men arose and clung to the main yard, which was left floating above the wreck—the one a butcher of Rouen, named Béraud, and the other a young cavalier named Godfrey, the son of Gilbert de l'Aigle. Fitz-Stephen himself, after sinking once, rose again to the surface, and perceiving the heads of the two men who were sustained by the spar, enquired



“What has become of the king's son?” “He is gone with the rest,” was the answer ; “we have seen no more of him, nor of his sister, nor any person of their company.” “Woe is me !” then exclaimed the mariner, and voluntarily plunged to the bottom. That November night was exceedingly

cold, so that the cavalier, being exhausted, lost his grasp of the spar before morning; and Béraud alone, the poorest of all the throng that had embarked in the *White Ship*, being partly supported by the sheepskin doublet in which he was wrapped, remained alive to relate the melancholy story. He, at dawn, was picked up by some fishermen, by whom, in the course of the following day, the tidings were conveyed to England, and, after a concealment of the facts for three days by the courtiers, the king was made acquainted with his loss. On hearing the circumstances Henry, who had no compassion for any woes but his own, fell down in a swoon; and, though he survived for more than fifteen years, and engaged again in the ambitious intrigues which had become habitual to him, he is said never to have smiled more. The loss of Prince William, if all be true that is related of him by the old chroniclers, was a gain to England. He is said to have threatened, that when he should become king, he would make his Saxon subjects draw the plough like oxen, and submit in all respects to the treatment of beasts of burden: and he, and the companions who perished with him "in calm weather, on a tranquil sea," are accused of "such shameful and infamous vices, as were wholly unknown in England until the coming of the Normans."

The death of Prince William, the only legitimate male issue of Henry, revived and brightened the prospects of William of Normandy. A new league was immediately formed in his favour, through the countenance and aid of Louis; and the Count of Anjou, who had abandoned his cause, and thereby procured the hand of the English prince for his daughter Matilda, on having her returned to him, deprived of the dower which she had taken to her husband, entered with ardour into the project against Henry. In testimony of his sincerity, he at once conferred his daughter Sibylla upon Fitz-Robert, or Clito, as he was now more generally called, and gave him immediate seizin of the county of Mons. A number of the Norman nobles also zealously embraced the quarrel of their rightful chief; and every thing promised favourably for the expulsion from the continent of English power and influence. King Henry, however, who was an adept in all the arts of treachery, and as vigilant as he was wily, so concerted his measures, that, ere his enemies were prepared for his reception, he crossed the sea once more with a large army, and falling upon the confederate lords unawares, [A. D. 1123] defeated them at Bourg Téroude, made many of them prisoners, and compelled the rest to disperse and seek refuge in their several strongholds.

An instance of his revengeful and sanguinary disposition belongs to this war. Luke de Barré, a knightly poet, or troubadour, who had formerly been in arms against the king, but had been pardoned on submission, had on the second occasion, aggravated his offence of rebellion by composing some satirical verses in ridicule of Henry. This kind of criticism was intolerable to the royal *Beau Clerc*, and, accordingly, on the recapture of De Barré, the tyrant ordered that his eyes should be put out. Charles the Good, Count of Flanders, who was present, remonstrated against this barbarous punishment,

urging that it was contrary to the institutions of chivalry to inflict corporal punishment on a knight, who had merely done battle in the service of his superior. Henry, however, not to be baulked of his vengeance, replied, "Luke de Barré has aforetime borne arms against me, and experienced my clemency; but to ingratitude for my favors he has now added the offence of satirizing me in his verses, and making me the laughing stock of my enemies. Let other poets learn from his example what they have to expect when they anger the King of England." The sentence was inflicted in all its rigour; but De Barré, in a paroxysm of agony, burst from the hands of his savage tormentors, and dashed out his brains against a wall.

Not content with merely punishing the Normans, Henry sought to strike terror to the heart of the French king. To this end he used all his address to detach the Count of Anjou from the side of his adversary, and, besides succeeding with him, he prevailed upon the Emperor Henry V., the husband of his daughter Matilda, or Maud, to take part in the quarrel, and to enter France with a large array from the Rhine, about the same time that the English troops should cross the frontier from Normandy. The hostility of this last foe was perhaps the salvation of France. The nobles, who had generally looked with indifference upon the struggle between Louis and Henry, were effectually aroused at the intelligence of a foreign invasion; and united all their forces to repel the aggression. The clergy and the common people, too, crowded around the royal standard; and the numbers mustered by Louis to defend the land over which he ruled, were soon swollen to such excess, as to have justified a contemporary historian in asserting that "they devoured the surface of the earth, and overspread plain, valley, and mountain, after the fashion of locusts." When the *ban* of war was proclaimed, sixty thousand men assembled at the rendezvous, from the districts of Rheims and Châlons; sixty thousand from Laon and Soissons; and an equal number from Paris and Orléans. The Count of Flanders appeared at the head of ten thousand followers; the Duke of Britany descended from his wild hills with all the men of his province who were capable of bearing arms; and the Duke of Guyenne, though engaged in a war against the Saracens, readily led back his vassals to the defence of his suzerain and his father-land. The church, besides the powerful aid which it contributed in men and money, lent its religious influence to consecrate the cause. The *Oriflamme*,—a square Gonfalon of flame-coloured silk, attached to the head of a gilded lance—the sacred banner of the abbey of St. Denis, was brought forth from the reliquary of the monastery, and placed with the utmost solemnity, and in the presence of the army, in the hands of the king, who received it from the monks bare-headed and barefooted, on his knees. The Emperor, alarmed at these preparations, hastened, without striking a blow, to secure his retreat, and shortly afterwards died; and Henry, with his usual adroitness, entered into negotiations for peace; which, as the barons of Louis, on the retirement of the Germans, withdrew their forces, and left the king to settle by himself

what they considered to be his private dispute concerning Normandy, were soon afterwards settled, and the hopes of Fitz-Robert were again dashed to the ground.

It is due to the character of Louis to add that, notwithstanding the necessity he was so frequently under of sacrificing the interests of William as the price of peace, he could never be induced to withdraw his protection from the person of the young prince; and that whenever an opportunity of advancing his fortunes occurred, he at once embraced it. Thus, when the Count of Anjou, at the instigation of Henry, took back his daughter Sibylla and her dower, and procured from the Pope a divorce between the young couple, on the plea that they were related within the prohibited degrees, the King of France bestowed on his protégé the hand of his queen's sister, and invested him with the counties of Pontoise, Chaumont, and the Vexin; and when he saw that no hope remained of seeing him established in Normandy, he sought occasion to bestow on him some other fief of scarcely inferior magnitude and importance. The last instance of his friendship was shewn on the occasion of a revolt in Flanders. At Bruges, the family of Van der Straten, sprung from the humbler ranks of the people, had acquired such influence, that Bertholf, its head, had been elected provost of the city; and was able, when required, to muster five-hundred men-at-arms to support or defend him. So great was the power and wealth of this man, that the Count of Flanders, Charles the Good, seems to have stood in some awe of him, and to have entertained a jealous fear of his growing importance. He is said to have endeavoured to undermine Bertholf's influence by reference to his lowly origin, and by other means, which, being reported to the provost, so exasperated him, that one morning, while the count was engaged in prayer in the church of St. Donatien, he and his nephew, Burkhard, entered the sacred edifice, and slaughtered their liege lord at the very foot of the altar. For such a crime, indignation and punishment were almost certain to be prompt; combining, as it did, murder, treason, and sacrilege. Against the first, the hearts of the citizens and people revolted, from natural disgust and hatred against sudden violence and bloodshed; the second awakened all the ire of the cavaliers:—a serf, daring to lift his arm against a noble, might prove that, man to man, the base born was a match for his chief, however long his pedigree, and thus weaken the foundations of feudal society itself; and, as regarded sacrilege, all classes conspired to condemn it with like vehemence—the people, the knightly orders, and the priesthood. Louis, appealed to as suzerain, to chastise the aggressors, hastened to Flanders with an army, attacked the cathedral in which the provost had taken refuge, and dragging him thence, had him publicly fastened to a post, loosed upon him a fierce and hungry dog, which, after tearing and devouring his face, put an end to his torments by strangling him. Nearly the whole family of the Van der Straten are said to have perished under torture for the countenance and support they had rendered to Bertholf.



Thus far the French king had the cordial support of the Flemings ; his next step was taken not only without their consent, but contrary to their wishes. Charles, having left no issue, Louis, as paramount lord of the seigniory, conferred the territory upon William of Normandy, who had accompanied him in the expedition, and who might be said to have some claim to the honour, as grandson of Matilda, the daughter of Earl Baldwin, of the ancient legitimate line. The Flemish people, however, were enraged at having a strange chief thus thrust upon them ; and, though they disguised their resentment for a time, no sooner had Louis withdrawn with his force, than a general revolt burst forth throughout Flanders ; and the insurgents, being encouraged and assisted by King Henry of England, and led by Dietric, or Thierry, Count of Alsace, a man of Teutonic origin, and grandson of Robert of Friesland, were soon enabled to make head in the open field against their obnoxious ruler. William nevertheless, who was a brave and skilful soldier, was every day gaining ground upon his antagonists, when, just in the moment of victory, after a battle which promised to prove decisive, fought under the walls of Alost, he received a wound in the hand in endeavouring to wrest a lance directed against himself from the hand of the *bourgeois* who bore it. The iron entered an artery ; the arm instantly began to swell, and to grow black, as high as the shoulder ; and after five days of unskilful medical treatment, the prince expired at the monastery of St.

Omer, on the 27th of July 1128, in the twenty-seventh year of a life which had been subject to the most extraordinary vicissitudes. Thierry obtained the government of Flanders, and Louis, who had now no object in opposing the desires of the Flemings, recognised him as their Count and as his liege vassal.

A long period of comparative tranquillity followed the death of Fitz-Robert, disturbed only by the private feuds of refractory barons, who were incessantly making war upon each other, and thus setting at nought both the royal authority and the national laws; but these, the king, who had now become unwieldy in his person, seems to have taken less heed of than in his greener age; and they consequently occupy little space in the contemporary annals of that era. Louis, indeed, seems to have felt that his infirmities had rendered him incapable of satisfactorily performing his functions without aid, as we find him on the 14th of April 1129, assisting at the installation of his eldest son Philippe, then only fourteen years old, as the partner of his throne; and all hope from this prince having failed, about two years afterwards, by the death of the youth, caused by a fall from his horse in one of the narrow streets of Paris, in the neighbourhood of La Grève, the old man hastened to raise to the same honour his second son, Louis *le Jeune*, (the young), and who was consecrated with much pomp and splendour by Pope Innocent II. in person, who made a journey to Paris for that purpose. In 1135, the king himself was seized with a serious illness; when, fancying his death at hand, he drew the royal signet ring from his finger, and presenting it to his son, caused him at the same time to be arrayed in the royal robes. He then prepared himself to take the habit of a monk of St. Benedict, and to meet his death with the same pious resignation as his father Philippe had encountered it, twenty-five years before. He was destined to survive, however, for two years longer. Yet such was the impression made upon him by the thought of his approaching dissolution, that he never afterwards assumed the ensigns of royalty, and the first thing he did on recovering his strength, was to set out on horseback, on a kind of pilgrimage, to the relics of the saints which reposed at Melun. His progress, during this journey has been thus described by father Daniel, "All along the road, the inhabitants of the neighbouring country thronged from every side to catch a sight of, and to bestow upon the pious and devout king, thousands of benedictions; all regarding him as their father, who had always protected them against whosoever had sought to become their oppressor."

The crowning triumph of the reign of Louis *le Gros* was reserved for his latest days. He had sought, from boyhood upward, to augment the substantial power of the crown, by humbling the overgrown feudatories around him, but hitherto, the territory actually subject to him being too small to furnish the necessary resources, he had been compelled to accept temporary, instead of permanent submission, and to content himself with watching, instead of governing events. Now, however, the road to greatness seemed indeed about

to open, if not upon him, at least upon his immediate successor. While residing at Bétisy, a favourite retreat which he possessed, about three leagues from Compiègne, he received a deputation from William, Duke of Aquitaine, who, being about to depart on pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James of Compostella, wished to settle all his immense possessions upon his daughter Eleanor, on condition of her receiving the hand of prince Louis, the king's son.

This tender filled the aged monarch with joy. It was the consummation of his ambition, and was accepted with avidity; and, all things conspiring to favour the nuptials, ere the treaty was concluded, new deputies announced that the Duke had died on the road, and that nothing remained for the bridegroom but to solemnize his marriage, and to take possession of his inheritance—a dower considerably larger in extent than the whole domain of the French king, and wealthy in almost double proportion to its magnitude. Contrasting the power of the Gascon chief with that of Louis the Fat, a modern French author says, “While the French and English sovereigns were exhausting themselves in combats wherein not more than three men were slain, William of Aquitaine was heading the armies of the King of Aragon, and contending with the Saracens in battles, where the number of dead amounted to fifteen thousand in one field, as at the contest of Cotence, in the year 1120.” Louis the young at once set out to fetch his bride; and while on his road back, received intelligence of the death of his father, which happened on the 1st of August, 1137. The extreme heat of the summer is said to have been the immediate cause of the old king's dissolution.

The character of Louis *le Gros* is stamped on the events of his reign too strongly to need elaboration: yet we must not pass without some further notice than has yet been bestowed upon it, the influence which he personally exerted upon the growth of popular civilization in France, and thence throughout Europe. He was the first of European sovereigns who, on perceiving the evils of feudalism upon his country, sought to mitigate them by elevating the people into such importance as they had not previously attained. “In his reign,” says M. Guizot, “we first perceive an idea arising in the minds of men, although still imperfect, confused and feeble, of a public power superior to the local powers which had possession of society, invested with authority to do justice to all such as could not obtain it by the pre-existing ordinary means, and capable of imposing order upon opponents. We mark also the idea of a great magistracy, whose essential province it was to maintain peace, to protect the weak, and to decide differences which none before could terminate. . . . This power in some degree resembled—to use an inexact, for want of a more explicit, phrase—that of a great justice of the peace for the whole country. . . . The name of the king was more frequently invoked. His influence penetrated into places where it had been previously unfelt, and his part in society became decidedly more active. Society was

in a state of the most deplorable disorder, and a prey to continual violence. It had no means of successfully grappling with this wretched confusion, or of regaining regularity or unity. The feudal institutions, those baronial parliaments and seignorial courts, with all the forms under which feudalism has been portrayed in modern times, and palmed upon us as a systematic and well ordered régime, were absolutely powerless and null, possessing nothing which could at all conduce to the restoration of order and justice; so that, in the midst of this social desolation, none knew to whom recourse might be had to obtain reparation for wrong, or to apply a remedy for crying evils—in a word to constitute a *State*, to however small an extent. The name of king, however, still remained, borne by one of the chiefs. Some of the aggrieved addressed themselves to him; and he, by their aid, was enabled to repress many scandalous sources of violence, and to establish some shew of order; at first merely in localities in the immediate vicinity of his residence, but subsequently, at a greater distance, and connected with the administration of domains not strictly his own. Thus his intervention extended, and with the name of protector of the public order, the arbiter of disputes and the redresser of the wrongs, he acquired substantial power and influence; and was enabled to commence a new royalty."

Among the new elements for the reconstruction of society, called into activity by Louis, were the burgher class—who had their habitation in towns and cities, and devoted themselves to the prosecution of art and science, to peaceful industry of all kinds, and to commerce. This class was peculiarly liable to oppression from the feudal lords, both on account of its superior wealth, and its distaste for the waste both of time and substance incident to warlike training, and the maintenance of an armed array; and independently of all this, the burghers were only in the condition of serfs. The extortions of the owners of castles and fiefs upon these men had been intolerable, from the beginning of the tenth century. "Every time that the proprietor of a domain in which a town was situated had any lust of pelf to satisfy, he had recourse to the inhabitants. The complaints of the boroughs were loud and frequent, on account of the absolute want of security for commerce. The merchants (who, at a later period, would only have had the rank of pedlars), after making their rounds, were unable to return to their towns in peace; the roads and avenues being incessantly blocked up by the lord and his followers." The king gave charters of enfranchisement to many of these towns within his jurisdiction; and thus, besides attaching them to his cause, conferred upon them something worth protection. In return, the free burgesses not only aided him with men and money, but interested the population of other places in his behalf, and formed a sort of mutual tie between the crown and the people; insomuch that it was not unfrequent for unenfranchised boroughs to invoke the aid of the sovereign against their superior and to take arms in his name when justice was denied them. Hence, the interests of the king and of the commonalty being identical, they became

united by reciprocal services, and the notion of a general government began to be formed.

The nature of the privileges conferred upon the municipalities by Louis *le Gros*, may be gathered from the following extracts from the charter which he granted, in the year 1128, to the city of Laon:—"It shall not be lawful for any one to take vengeance on another, whether bond or free, for any crime. Without a legal warrant he shall not even apprehend him; or, should it be necessary for him to do so, it shall only be to detain him till he can conduct him to the legal judge. Any burgess who may have injured a clerk, a noble or a merchant, shall be summoned to appear, within four days, before the mayor and his assessors, and shall there pay the fine adjudged. If contumacious, he shall be banished the city with all his family; and if any attempt shall be made by the bishop or baron of the district to protect him against justice, his property shall be forfeited and destroyed. Personal injury and murder shall be punished by retaliation, member for member, and life for life. The judge, however, should he see cause, may accept a fine as compensation. No burgess shall marry a woman of another jurisdiction, without the consent of the superior thereof. Strangers shall not be admitted as citizens without the consent of their former superiors. Four deniers (twelve of which made a sou, the twentieth part of a livre—somewhat less in value, then as now, than an English shilling,) shall be paid each term to the king, besides the taxes to which property without the city may be liable. If any noble shall injure the community or any member thereof, he shall make reparation within fifteen days, on being duly warned and required to do so; and, should he fail, his people and property within the district shall be seized. For these privileges, the king shall be entitled to a night's lodging at three different times in the year, should he so often visit the city of Laon; or in lieu thereof payment shall be made to him of twenty livres."

The corporate body once formed, the Members bound themselves by oath to defend each other, to maintain their property and privileges against all aggressors, and to submit themselves and their affairs to the municipal laws and government of their respective burghs. The means of mutual defence, before wanting, were cheerfully supplied by the citizens, who contributed readily to the erection of walls and fortresses, and for the maintenance of armed associations, in such strength as frequently to overawe the neighbouring barons, who had before been their spoilers. Modern freedom and social right had thus a beginning—rude indeed in its origin, and slow of growth, but still sufficient in all respects to inspire the burghers, theretofore debased by slavish servitude, with at least a glimmering notion of the dignity to which as men they had a right to aspire. The privileges of citizenship involved the right of self-government, the right of electing magistrates and other officers, the right of voting in the imposition of local taxes and rates, and of accepting or rejecting the local laws and regulations framed for their

respective guilds or fraternities : and the knowledge and experience, derived from this participation in the responsibilities of domestic freedom, formed an excellent—perhaps a necessary—preparation for the interference of homely men in the more complicated and important affairs of the nation at large, regarded as one community—a fact of which Louis VI. seems to have been the first clearly to discern the tendency and bearings, and accordingly the first to derive advantage from the discovery.

In disposition, Louis was generous and kind ; and his ambition—the vice of his age—seems to have been more legitimate and less selfish than that of most of his contemporaries. He inherited neither the indolence, nor the depravity of his father ; nor was his religion tainted with an equal degree of craven superstition, which, in Philippe, trembled and grew pale before the clergy, but in private prompted him to insult high heaven with daring impiety. Like all the Capetian princes, the *Battler* was a man of learning himself, and a liberal patron of learning, science, art, and genius in others. One of his chief councillors was Suger, abbot of St. Denis, the faithful chronicler of the transactions of his reign.

The acts of the reign of Louis VII. (*le Jeune*) begin from the date of his reaching Orléans, on his return to Paris, after being apprised of the death of his father. There his progress with his bride was stayed for a few days by a revolt of the inhabitants, who flocked around him to demand a charter of enfranchisement, such as his father was in the habit of bestowing upon towns and cities whose fidelity he had proved, or indeed who earnestly desired to be admitted within the pale of his constantly enlarging constitution. The new monarch however, or rather his ministers—for the king was yet but eighteen years old—had already abandoned the policy of the deceased sovereign ; instead therefore of having their request granted, the ringleaders of the sedition, as it was called, were seized and put to death. No stronger illustration need be given as to the beneficial effect produced by the personal influence of Louis *le Gros* in the administration of public affairs, than is furnished by this single fact : and it did not pass without corresponding results. The barons, subdued or intimidated during the last reign, by the personal courage, prudent conduct, and known talent of the king, aided by the commons of the realm, now again began to grow turbulent, and to defy the royal authority. Still Louis the Young, nothing daunted, and possessing, notwithstanding his youth, considerable military skill, did not decline the war ; and by promptitude and personal valour he succeeded in crushing the hostility of several chiefs, who, presuming on his want of experience and sagacity, had taken arms against him at a venture. This done, the king turned at once to the south, on which his chief hopes of a bright future depended ; and though here, as well as elsewhere, he encountered a strong spirit of opposition from the feudatories, he succeeded in procuring his authority to be recognised by the lord of Aunis whom he defeated in an engagement, and subsequently

by the Count of Angoulême himself, who claimed to be the superior of the subjugated chief. He then directed a large force against Toulouse, the capital of the southern provinces; and, though he did not meet with full success in this bold enterprise, he yet compelled the count to pay him homage, and to acknowledge his suzerainty.

He became involved shortly afterwards in a dispute with Pope Innocent II., which threatened him, for a time, with serious consequences. The church had long arrogated to itself the exclusive patronage of all vacant bishoprics and benefices throughout Christendom; and having frequently succeeded in enforcing its claims from monarchs of riper age and stronger judgment than Louis, obstinately contested the matter—to its members an important one—with him. The Kings of France, on the other hand, had always denied the rights contended for, and frequently refused to admit the usurpations of the clergy; and Louis, emboldened by the acquisition of Aquitaine, was by no means inclined to forego any of the prerogatives of his ancestors, in favour of priest or layman. The dispute came to trial on the death of Alberic, Archbishop of Bourges; when the Pope, without so much as consulting the inclinations of the young king, appointed Pierre la Châtre to the see. Louis, on hearing of this consummation of papal insolence and assumption, swore that Pierre should never be archbishop of Bourges, and hastened to drive him from his diocese. Innocent II. retorted by laying an interdict on France; when the king, feeling strong enough to maintain his position, appealed at once to the sword. The effects of his resentment fell first upon Thibaut Count of Champagne, who had afforded refuge to La Châtre when expelled from Bourges, and who, after causing the Pontifical interdict to be published in his domains, had announced himself as a partisan of Innocent against his suzerain. The territories of the count were ravaged with fire and slaughter—neither men, women or children,—towns or villages,—cattle in the field, or corn in the homestead—implements of industry or articles of merchandize, being spared. Among other places, the village of Vitry was attacked, and, being carried by assault, was given to the flames, in the midst of which thirteen hundred peasants, who had taken refuge in the church, as an inviolable sanctuary, were miserably consumed [A. D. 1143]. Louis is said to have heard, and been shocked with the cries of these unhappy victims of his rage, and to have sought, but in vain, to save them from destruction. Whether so or not, however, the spectacle made a deep impression upon him, and disposed him to listen to overtures calculated to put an end to such scenes of barbarian excess. A peace was immediately afterwards concluded with Thibaut; La Châtre was recognised as Bishop of Bourges; and Louis, to atone for the crime of which he had been guilty, vowed to march in person to the Holy Land, on a crusade, which Bernard, the celebrated abbot of Clairvaux, was then preaching throughout France.

Nearly fifty years had elapsed since the departure of the first soldiers

of the cross for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, and during the interval, many changes had taken place in the constitution and government of Palestine. Edessa, which had first fallen to the Christians, had been retaken by the Turks; Antioch was threatened by an overwhelming host. Tripoli was subjected to constant depredations from the Turks and Arabs, who had made common cause against the European conquerors; and Jerusalem itself was threatened with assault and recapture by the intrepid Saracens. It was under these circumstances, and on the reception of an embassy from Baldwin, the successor of Godfrey de Bouillon, King of Jerusalem, praying for succour against his foes, that Louis announced his intention of visiting Palestine. In 1145 he summoned a great council of nobles at Bourges, where it was resolved to employ the whole force of the kingdom in the expedition; and, in the following year, the *Parliament* of Vezelay, in the county of Nèvers—a conference of princes, barons and clergy—was convoked for the purpose of arranging the necessary preliminaries for the departure of the host. This last assembly was attended by numbers scarcely inferior to those which met in the famous council of Clermont, at which Pope Urban had preached the first crusade; and, like that, it was held in the open air, being at the foot of a mountain which overhangs the city,—the cathedral, the public square, and the town itself having been too much crowded to admit of deliberation within the walls. There Bernard, afterwards canonized, harangued the concourse from the chair of State which he shared with the king, and represented the miserable condition of the Christians in Palestine. “Our brethren,” he exclaimed, “are afflicted and oppressed beyond measure. Their cities are conquered, their persons are enslaved; numbers are shut up in noisome dungeons, loaded with fetters, and subjected to torture, hunger and starvation. Fly then, to rescue and aid them against the infidels—the enemies of our holy religion. God will crown your enterprise with success, and will grant to the soldiers of the faith an eternal recompense.” Deafening shouts of “The Cross—the cross!” followed his impassioned address; and such was the multitude, which thronged around the preacher to receive the badges which had been prepared for distribution among volunteers, that the stock was speedily exhausted, and Bernard with his own hands, tore his vestment into shreds to furnish symbols for the still pressing crowd.

King Louis and his consort Eleanor, notwithstanding the opposition of Suger, chief minister and adviser of his sovereign, were the first whose names were enrolled among the consecrated army. The Counts of Toulouse, of Flanders, and of Ponthieu followed their example; and the most illustrious names which France had to boast were soon recorded beneath theirs. The command of the expedition was offered to Bernard; but that saint, zealous as he was for the service of Christianity, was far too prudent to be tempted by so specious a lure to quit the peaceful path of fame which he had chosen in his own land; and, on his declining the honour, it was unanimously

conferred upon Louis. Such was the warlike enthusiasm awakened at this parliament that the knights and nobles who assumed the cross are said to have sent to those who preferred remaining at home, to husband their wealth, and devote themselves to merely rational pursuits, a distaff and scissars as fitting emblems of their effeminacy and cowardice.

In Germany, whither Bernard passed from France, a similar spirit was aroused; and Conrad III., who was then Emperor, not only took the cross himself, but assembled an army of about seventy thousand men at arms, besides light cavalry and infantry, to assist in subjugating the distant East. Among the rest, a band of females, armed like Amazons, and mounted like men, enrolled themselves in the German host; and under the conduct of a leader, chosen from their own ranks, and called, from her glittering spurs and rich buskins, "the lady with the golden feet," prepared to march with "their devout brethren," much, it may be presumed, to the gratification of the faithful, but to the serious detriment of soldier-like discipline and christian morality among the whole body. This German array, though the last to take arms, was the first to depart on its weary pilgrimage—taking its route through the valley of the Danube to Constantinople, in the year 1146.

Louis the Young was occupied nearly twelve months longer in completing his equipment and preparations. His knights and nobles, as at the first crusade, sold, or mortgaged all that they possessed to raise money for the outfit of themselves and their followers; and the king, finding his legitimate finances insufficient for so magnificent an undertaking, was compelled to have recourse to the sale of charters of enfranchisement and community to various boroughs and towns of his realm; and to levy subsidies from even monasteries, convents and ecclesiastical benefices. The gay and thoughtless Queen Eleanor was not idle meanwhile. Besides obtaining large supplies of money for her husband from Guyenne and Aquitaine, she, in imitation of the Germans, assembled around her a large troop of feminine warriors, among whom she enacted the part of the "golden-footed lady" in her own person; and she established moreover a body-guard for herself and her Amazons, comprising the handsomest and noblest youths of France. From these circumstances—especially when we consider that gallantry and a love of fame and pleasure had actuated as many to enlist in the crusading ranks as had been impelled by religious motives—we shall be enabled to form a tolerably accurate estimate of the notions of piety and self-denial which prevailed among the hordes which Europe sent forth from time to time to destroy infidelity in the Holy Land, and to plant and propagate there the true faith upon its ruins.

At Whitsuntide in the year 1147—the regency of the kingdom, which the Pope had gratuitously declared to be under his protection, having been entrusted to the abbot Suger, and all other things being in readiness—Louis received the *Oriflamme*, a cross which had been consecrated at Rome for his especial use, and a pilgrim's scrip and staff, and took his departure

for Metz, the rendezvous of his followers. Thence the multitude, which has been estimated at not less than two hundred thousand souls, proceeded, along the same line as Conrad had pursued, through the German states, to the Greek capital, and from Constantinople they were soon shipped across the Bosphorus by Manuel Comnenus, who entertained a greater dread, and consequent hatred, of the Franks than even of his avowed enemies the Saracens; and being landed in Asia, they marched without delay to Nicæa. Here they halted for awhile, in order to obtain certain news concerning Conrad and his Germans, of whose movements discouraging reports began to be rife throughout the country; and here the disastrous tidings which had been gathered were soon confirmed by the Emperor himself and the wreck of his army. Conrad had been misled and betrayed by the Greeks, and after sustaining innumerable petty attacks from flying squadrons of Turks, had been set upon and defeated in a great battle at Iconium, from which not a tenth part of the muster which he had led from Germany escaped. Louis and his friend embraced in sorrow, and, after mature deliberation, resolved to prosecute their future march in company—not by the route which had been chosen by the Emperor, through the central provinces of Asia Minor, but by the less dangerous, though longer course of the sea-coast.

On resuming their journey, the French king, seeing that the German troops were so reduced as to make the force commanded by Conrad appear insignificant, placed at his disposal the levies of Lorraine and Arles; but so humbled and mortified was the Emperor, that on reaching Ephesus, he notified his intention of returning to Constantinople to recruit his strength, and to return in the spring with new vigour to the enterprise. Louis celebrated at Ephesus the festival of Christmas, and on the close of the holidays pressed forward again towards Palestine. In the march to Laodicea the French began first to be molested by the Turks, who, flying around them in light clouds, assailed them with arrows and javelins, and through the fleetness of their horses were enabled to disperse and reform at a distance, before the heavily accoutred christians could prepare to retaliate by an attack. The slightest disorder in the European ranks was instantly perceived and turned to advantage by the enemy; and the crusaders, growing impatient of this harassing warfare, declared that, without a miracle, their whole force, like that of the Egypto-Israelites, must be devoured in the wilderness, ere they could obtain even a glimpse of the land of promise. Experience had conferred on them the gift of prophecy. Soon after quitting Laodicea, the stock of provisions carried with the army, both for men and horses, was exhausted, and all that was thenceforth obtained was by foraging parties—many of which were cut off by the ever active and vigilant foe. The sufferings endured by men and women, soldiers and humbler pilgrims, were thus rendered intolerable, and numbers daily fell and perished of hunger and thirst by the way.

King Louis's advanced guard was at this time commanded by a noble



Louis VII. assailed by the Turks.

Poitevin, named Geoffroy Rançon, who, having to cross a mountain ridge in his march, and arriving about the close of day at the summit of the range, unexpectedly beheld at the foot of the sterile steep, a rich and fertile plain, abounding in forage. The charms of this tempting prospect, which seemed moreover to offer a safe and pleasant place of encampment, were irresistible. Geoffroy, instead of waiting till the main body of the army, which was still entangled in the difficult passes of the hills, came up, descended at once to the luxuriant fields before him, and there, having allowed his men to disperse, they were immediately attacked by a horde of Turks, who had lain till then in ambush, and the greater portion of them were slain. When Louis himself arrived, he was suddenly assailed from the heights, and his army thrown into irretrievable confusion and dismay. In the *mêlée*, the king, separated from his followers, forty of the most distinguished of whom are said to have fallen around him, defending his person, was compelled to dismount from his horse, and seek safety in a tree growing from the edge of a steep and craggy rock, which jutted out upon the pass by which the christians had ascended the mountain. Here he defended himself with the utmost vigour against the repeated attacks of a host; and, if the flattering chroniclers of that age may be believed, he achieved prodigies in the decapitation and dismemberment of such unhappy Turks as were induced to venture within reach of his sword. His armour in every part was pierced and made to bristle with arrows; but, so far from being beaten, he defended himself till night, and then, unable to rejoin his scattered soldiers, he lay down and kept watch upon the bare rock till released from his perilous position by some Frenchmen who happened to pass in search of their comrades. Next day, when a general muster was called, it was ascertained that the loss of the crusaders, in this unfortunate encounter, amounted to not less than twenty thousand men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners. De Rançon was degraded from his command, as a punishment for his imprudence, and an obscure knight, named Gilbert, of whose history scarcely a fragment has been preserved, was appointed to his place. This leader, besides conducting the corps entrusted to him without further loss or molestation to Satalia, a port on the coast of Pamphylia, nearly opposite to Cyprus, had the merit of establishing better discipline than had before existed throughout the whole army.

From the gulf of Satalia, Louis and his noble knights and titled ladies proceeded by sea to Antioch, leaving their humbler followers, and the pilgrims, who had accompanied them and shared their dangers hitherto, to pursue their journey by land, under the escort of a troop of Greek horsemen, hired to guide and guard them for the sum of five hundred marks! Archambaud de Bourbon, and Thierry of Alsace, Count of Flanders, were the only chiefs who could be prevailed upon to remain with the poor remnant thus left behind to perish, or to find their way to the goal of their hopes as they best might; and, even they, finding the task of conducting such noteless comrades irksome, from the treachery of the Greeks, the hostility of the

people through whose country they had to pass, and the incessant attacks of the Saracens, speedily abandoned their charge, and, returning to Satalia, embarked to rejoin their prouder brothers in arms. The company which remained in Pamphylia, after several fruitless attempts to move forward, were reduced to such misery and destitution that even the Mussulmans took pity on them, and after affording relief to their sick, wounded, and indigent, assisted a few stragglers to pursue their journey to Antioch, prevailed upon others—numbering upwards of three thousand to forswear Christianity and embrace the Mohammedan faith, and sold the rest into slavery.

Louis in the meantime had reached Antioch, and been received with distinguished honour by Raymond of Poitiers, who ruled there as prince, and who was uncle to Queen Eleanor. This ambitious warrior indeed wished to detain the king in his dominions, hoping probably, through his good offices, and by the aid of the French lances which accompanied him, to be enabled to extend his own dominion to Aleppo, against which he had long conceived designs of conquest. Another reason, however, has been assigned for the desire of the prince to arrest the progress of the Crusaders



at this point—namely that he had engaged in an incestuous intrigue with the queen his niece, who had already grown tired of her devout

husband, whom she characterized as "nothing better than a monk with a sword, who, on his return from combat, invariably required the performance of *vespers* and *complies*"—the evening services of the Romish church. The matter was said to have gone to such lengths, that Raymond had formed the design of taking open possession of Eleanor, and expelling her husband from his territories by force. But, be this as it may, there appears to be no reason whatever to doubt of the wantonness and unchastity of the queen—the "golden-footed lady"—who had sought distinction as the leader of a mixed train of male and female adherents, closely associated in the same enterprise, and celebrated for beauty, gaiety, and what, in the zenith of chivalry, was ambiguously called courtesy. That she had an adulterous intercourse at Antioch, if not with her uncle, at least with a young and handsome Saracen named Saladin,—not the generous Soldan, who subsequently won the surname of Great, but a man of low birth, and by profession a minstrel—seems almost capable of proof; and the report of this, and also of the machinations of Raymond, having reached the ears of Louis, the king hastened to flee by night, through a gate at which he had gained over the sentinels by bribery, with his worthless spouse and his companions in arms, from a city in which, being surrounded with treachery and infidelity, he could have no security from assassination.

In a few days the French troops appeared before the gates of Jerusalem, whence the inhabitants thronged to meet and to escort them into the city, bearing olive branches in their hands, and singing "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Having performed their vows and paid their adorations at the holy sepulchre, Louis and the German sovereign, at the head of a brilliant, but now comparatively slender train of cavaliers, hastened to St. Jean d'Acre, to attend a general assembly of Christian princes and knights; where after a tedious deliberation it was resolved that the Crusaders, assisted by the Templars and Hospitallers, should endeavour, as their original purpose had miscarried, to obtain possession of Damascus.

That city accordingly was soon afterwards invested; but, owing to the want of military skill and effective concert among the besiegers, and probably also to the treachery which has been ascribed to the Syrian Christians, called *Pullani*—a race who seem to have differed little, except in name, from the Saracens among whom they dwelt—the operations made little progress, and at last famine and dissension having crept into the camp, the hopeless task of reducing the place was abandoned, and the discomfited army returned to Jerusalem. Some individual feats of arms are recorded in connection with this siege, which seem to belong to romance rather than to history. The most redoubtable of the christian heroes was Conrad; of whom, among other things, it is reported that, one day, in the midst of a *mêlée*, he rushed against a gigantic Mussulman, who had heaped a pile of slaughtered antagonists around him, and dealing a furious blow with his sword upon the shoulders of the Arab, he cut him instantly in two.

This and similar acts of strength and bravery are said to have struck such terror into the Damascenes, that at one period they were on the point of delivering up the keys of the city; but, hearing that their assailants had already commenced a promising quarrel among themselves, concerning the appointment of a chief for the contemplated conquest, the beleagured garrison took heart once more, and prolonged resistance till their efforts were crowned with success.

Some attempt appears afterwards to have been made or meditated against Ascalon; but the constant disasters which attended every movement throughout the expedition had subdued the courage and dissipated the hopes of the most sanguine, and all were prepared to abandon an undertaking which held forth no better promise than that of disgrace and ruin. "The Emperor Conrad," to use the graphic language of Sir Walter Scott, on a congenial subject, "and the remnant of his Germans, first withdrew from the scene, and reached their own country without farther disaster. Next the French nobles began to steal back, as it were, one by one, from the ill-omened enterprise. King Louis alone seemed yet to nourish the lingering hope that he might cover his retreat with some action of credit; and it was not till he was alarmed with tidings of commotions in France that he abandoned Palestine, where he had been unable to acquire even a single hamlet, or one foot of land."

Louis, in fact, spent a long year at Jerusalem after the Emperor's departure, which was employed "in exercises, not of arms, but of devotion;" and it was only towards the middle of the year 1149 that he embarked to return to his own land by way of Italy. He first landed in Calabria, whence, after a brief delay, he proceeded to Rome, where he had an interview with Pope Eugenius III., whom he is said to have urged to instruct St. Bernard of Clairvaux to preach a new crusade, pledging himself, notwithstanding his many misfortunes, to join it in person with as large an army as he could collect; and finally he re-entered his own dominions at St. Gilles, on the Rhône, in the month of October, in the same year, accompanied by not more than two or three hundred followers of all the immense host with which he had set out from Metz, little better than two years before.

During the absence of the king, the administration of the government by Suger had been of the most prudent, and at the same time vigorous, character. The treasury, it is true, was empty, and some of the nobles were, as usual, refractory; but for the one the crusade itself had to account; and the other was the disease of the age. The most important event, as regarded the sovereign himself, had been an attempt made by Robert, Count de Dreux—Louis' cousin, who had originally accompanied him to Palestine, but had returned some time before him—to supplant him in the affections of the French barons, and by their aid to secure the throne. The intrigues of this reckless and ambitious young man, however, having been revealed to Suger, were promptly frustrated by that able minister, and De Dreux, reduced to

insignificance, at once lost the sympathy and support of all on whose partisanship he had relied.

On his return, Louis speedily found abundant causes of disquietude. He and his faithless wife had never been cordially reconciled since the disclosure of her perfidious wantonness at Antioch; and from the moment the king set foot again in France he seems to have embraced a firm resolution to get rid of her by a divorce. Suger opposed all the weight of his eloquence to this impolitic step, which he clearly perceived would be injurious to the royal authority, by depriving the crown of its valuable possessions in the South, and thus limiting its influence once more to the narrow boundaries of the realm of Louis VI. But the life of this wise man and faithful councillor terminated in the month of January, 1152, and Louis was unfortunately left to pursue the bent of his inclinations. A council was accordingly summoned to meet forthwith at Baugenci-sur-Loire, where the whole question concerning the conduct of Eleanor was submitted to prelatical authority. The Bishop of Langres who appeared as advocate for the king, announced that his client "could no longer place faith in his wife, and could never be certain of the legitimacy of her children," (she had borne the king two daughters, one of them since her return from the Holy Land) "and that he claimed a divorce on the ground of her known incontinence." The archbishop of Bordeaux, who wished to avoid farther scandal, interposed, before the production of evidence, and proposed that the question of separation between the royal pair should be granted, not on the alleged ground of the queen's adultery, but on the consanguinity of the parties, which might—had it been thought of—have been objected by the canonical law as an insuperable barrier to the marriage, when it was first contracted. This delicate course relieved the council from a dilemma, and enabled it without farther delay to decide that the marriage ought never to have been entered into, and that it was consequently dissolved and null. The sentence afforded unmitigated satisfaction to both parties concerned. The wounded honour of the king was healed: and the queen was released from a thralldom of which she had long complained as a penance and mortification of the most intolerable description. The gratification of Louis, however, was barren; while the joy of Eleanor was increased by the restitution of her dowry—the rich and splendid domains of Aquitaine, Guyenne, and Poitou, which could not of course be now withheld, merely on the pretence of a marriage which every one had consented to treat as illegal from its commencement.

The injured husband had probably proceeded thus far on the supposition that no prince or noble could be found willing to become the second husband of so profligate a wife, and that consequently her inheritance would eventually devolve on himself in right of his daughters, for legitimatising whom a bull might, without difficulty, be obtained, when required, from the Pope. If such was his reasoning, however, his anticipations were miserably foiled. Eleanor was immediately besieged with suitors, and her only

difficulty was to make a choice, and to escape the violent importunities of rejected lovers. So strong was the attachment of Thibaud, Count of Chartres—a brother of Stephen, the reigning king of England—to her person, or her portion, that, ere she could reach her southern home, he sought to entrap her in his castle of Blois, and to marry her by force. Having obtained intelligence of the count's design, and having, moreover, made pre-election of a younger successor to her monkish consort, Eleanor stole away from the capital of Thibaud by night and descended the Loire in a boat towards the city of Tours, where Geoffrey of Anjou, the younger brother of Henry, Duke of Normandy, having conceived a similar project to that of the Count of Chartres, had planted an ambush to seize her person. Again, "being warned by her good angel," the divorced wanton escaped, by suddenly taking a different road, and proceeding to Poitiers, whence she dispatched a messenger to Henry Plantagenet, her chosen bridegroom; who, hastening to secure so rich a prize, immediately attended her bidding, and made her his wife within six weeks after her divorce. Henry at this time was only nineteen years of age; but, being in possession of Normandy and Anjou, and having the crown of England in perspective, as eldest son of the Empress Matilda, sole surviving child of King Henry I., he was already looked upon as one of the most powerful princes of the age. The acquisition of Eleanor's dower gave him a preponderating influence, even in France, over the king, his suzerain. Louis, it is added, when too late, had seen his error, and sent to prohibit young Henry from forming the alliance of such magnificent territories; but the mischief had been done ere his messengers made their appearance, and the outwitted monarch was fain to content himself with the homage of his nominal vassal for the domains which, by his bold, though certainly somewhat unscrupulous policy, the latter had been fortunate enough to sever from the realm of France.

The extent of loss sustained by the French sovereign in consequence of these transactions may be estimated with some degree of precision by a comparison of his remaining possessions with those of the Plantagenet. Henry occupied the whole Atlantic coast line, from Dieppe to Bayonne, with the exception only of the promontory of Britany, which still maintained a kind of wild independence, sometimes supporting the pretensions of the Dukes of Normandy, and at others, allying itself closely with the kings of France. Normandy, Poitou, Auvergne, the Limousin, Guyenne, and Gascony were subject to this young prince's rule, and Anjou, Touraine and Maine to the sway of his father and brother; while those provinces alone appertained to Louis which were bounded by the Loire, the Saône and the Meuse; a comparatively narrow region, and considerably weakened by being cooped up and surrounded, except on one side, by the dominions of his formidable rival, and of that rival's nearest relatives.

Louis could not fail to deplore the calamity thus brought upon himself and his country by his imprudence; and the moment an opportunity

occurred, he sought to rectify his error. The accession of Henry to the throne of England on the death of Stephen, in the year 1154, seemed a favourable time for dealing a blow at the continental power of his overgrown vassal. He accordingly encouraged Geoffrey, Henry's brother, to lay claim to the county of Anjou, which it had been stipulated, on the recent death of the old earl, should be relinquished by the elder to the younger of his sons, in the event of the former becoming king of England. The claim was forthwith made, and was at first so well supported by the French king, and by the feudal lords and prelates of Anjou, that Henry found it necessary to cross the seas with an army, in 1156, in order to maintain with the sword the integrity of his immense domains; and, so greatly did he prosper in his enterprise, that he not only induced Louis to abandon his brother's cause, but succeeded in enlarging his own possessions with the addition of Touraine and Maine, of which Geoffrey had been put in possession during his father's life time, and over which therefore Henry had no legitimate claim, except, perhaps, as feudal superior. The king had even the tact and talent subsequently to turn to his advantage the generosity of strangers to his ill-used brother; who, on being deprived of his inheritance, had been elected governor of the free city of Nantes by its burgesses.

On the death of Geoffrey in 1158, the citizens returned to their old connexion with Conan IV., Duke of Brittany; but Henry, claiming as heir to the deceased Count, asserted his right to all such territory, howsoever acquired, as his brother had held in fee. Conan, after a brief but sanguinary struggle, was compelled to submit; and the English monarch was thenceforth recognised as Master, not only of Nantes, but of all the country lying between the Loire and the Vilaine. A little later the whole of Brittany was forced to vail its independence; and after acknowledging as their future chief the son of the ambitious Plantagenet, ceased to be a free and distinct nation.

Louis seems to have been overawed by the power and the successes of Henry, and, instead of attempting to assist those who were bold enough to resent his usurpations, he consented, on the negotiation of Thomas à Becket, who was then attracting attention throughout Europe, by the skill and talent which he exercised at the English court, to bestow his daughter Margaret, the child of his second wife, Constance of Castille, on Prince Henry, the eldest son of the King of England, and of the repudiated Eleanor of Aquitaine. The affianced princess, then but six months old, was delivered into the custody of a Norman baron, and her dowry, consisting of three castles, with their respective domains in the Vexin, was entrusted to the guardianship of the Knights Templars, till young Henry, at present only in his fourth year, should be of age to complete the marriage.

The good understanding thus apparently established between the sovereigns was not, however, of long standing. The restless ambition of Henry, which was constantly urging him to new undertakings; emboldened him, now that he had nothing to apprehend from hostilities near home, to advance claims to

territories at a distance. He had learned from his wife that her first husband had set up pretensions in her name to the county of Toulouse, and although Louis had failed to make good his assumption, the King of England was not without confident hopes of better success, and of being enabled to extend his power along the whole range of the Pyrenees, from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. He hastened therefore to demand the surrender of the territory which he coveted; but Raymond de St. Gilles, the Count of Toulouse, replied to the haughty mandate by instantly unfurling his standard, and publishing his ban of war; steps which were cordially approved and admirably seconded by the Toulousain commune or corporation. Henry, at once, marched against what he affected to consider his "rebellious vassals," and laid siege to their city. Raymond, on his part, appealed to the French king, as his brother-in-law and legitimate suzerain; and Louis, seeing the danger likely to accrue to himself, should the project of his rival be accomplished, hastened with an army to the relief of the beleaguered garrison. He at once marched through Berry, which in great part belonged to him, and proceeding thence by way of the Limousin, the people of which, from hatred of the Normans, granted him a free passage, he threw himself with his reinforcements into Toulouse, and was received with the most enthusiastic joy by the inhabitants, as their deliverer and father. Becket, whose character was more energetic and English, and whose policy was proportionably bolder than his master's, is said to have advised the instant assault of the city; but Henry, knowing that even success in such a venture could have been of little service to him, seeing that it would almost necessarily have armed every feudatory of the realm against the captor of the king, to whom all had done homage and sworn fealty, resolved to convert the personal interference of his liege into a pretext of withdrawal from a doubtful struggle; and accordingly, declaring that he could not so far insult his superior, as to besiege a city in which he was present, the wily Plantagenet forthwith broke up his camp, and retired without delay to Normandy. The actual value of Henry's deference for his sovereign, was immediately afterwards evinced by his attack upon and seizure of two or three of the royal castles; and by a war of brigandage, which he conducted into those parts of the French territory, which lay contiguous to his own Norman domains. The frontiers of Normandy consequently, from that time, became, for a space, the theatre of hostilities between the kings, till the resources of both being exhausted, and their vassals having grown tired of protracted and severe service, which seemed to have no tangible object, a truce was mutually agreed upon, which at Whitsuntide in the following year [1160] was converted into a formal peace.

It will not be irrelevant here to pause for a moment to review the condition of the Southern provinces of France, as affected by the changes of dynasty, and of government in the nation at large, since the dissolution of the Empire of Charlemagne. At the time of the deposition of Charles *le Gros*, and the

election of Eudes, Count of Paris, as King of the Franks, the Aquitanians, refusing to acknowledge the new sovereign, chose a leader for themselves, and erected their province into a separate state, over which Ranulf, first as king and afterwards as duke, reigned in full sovereignty from the Loire to the Pyrenees. Eudes had made an attempt to subjugate the new principality, but, failing in his object, the division between the people of the South and the people of the North became more broad and more distinctly marked than ever. In like manner, Hugues Capet, by his renewed efforts to effect a junction between France and Aquitaine, and his signal failure to do more than procure a verbal and merely partial recognition of his suzerainty, assisted to confirm the Provençal tribes in their determination to preserve themselves as a different race from the barbarous Franks, who spoke another language, obeyed other laws, and maintained customs which the Aquitanians despised and rejected. It was among the latter people that the remains of Roman civilization has lingered after the conquest of the country by the hordes of the North. The feudal system had never, in their communities, given the same ascendancy to the chief, and imposed the same degradation upon the vassal, as throughout the Provinces where the Tudesque rule had been more completely established. "Although," says Augustin Thierry, "men were there, as elsewhere of different ranks, and there were grades of higher and lower classes, some dwelling in castles and others in huts; although also the wealthy may have been insolent and the powerful tyrannical, the soil itself belonged to the body of the people, and no one disputed their free property therein. It was the mass of the people, that had at several intervals reconquered their native soil from the invaders who had crossed the Loire, and been driven back again upon the north. The Duchies, the Counties, the Vice-Counties and the Seigniories were all more or less national. Many of them had originated in the time of popular insurrections against the rule of foreigners, and their tenure had been legitimatised and ratified by the approval of the people. The consequence of this, necessarily was that the people, in return, exercised a right of controlling the public conduct of their lords and great men. To satirise the chiefs, whether of the state or of the church, by pointed epigrams or biting pasquinades, did not to the south of the Loire amount to misprision of treason. Here therefore there was some political existence, in which the presence of the nation was consciously felt; while northward of the same river Loire, the people were scattered over the fields, where they lived and died as Serfs, or were penned up in miserable towns, and wore out in hard task-labour a wretched life in the service of their jealous masters."

The very liberty, however, which the Aquitanian people enjoyed in the midst of the feudal slavery which surrounded them contributed, in the end, to their ruin. The independence of their several districts and cities left them without a recognised rallying point when assailed, and they were compelled, in the absence of a general protector, to have recourse to the king,

or to some powerful chief for the aid which, had they been united, they might have afforded to each other. From the moment, therefore, that the King of England as Duke of Aquitaine and Count of Poitou began to exert an influence in the affairs of the South of France, and to render it necessary for the people alternatively to invoke his assistance and that of King Louis, against the encroachments upon their privileges of the one or the other of these sovereigns, may be dated the commencement of an era of decline and misery among the population of what, from its dialect, was afterwards called Languedoc. Placed between two rival powers, equally ambitious, the people were under the necessity of attaching themselves to Henry or Louis, or their respective successors; and by each of their protectors they were, as circumstances required, supported or abandoned, cajoled, betrayed or sold. The only leisure and happiness which the men of the South thenceforth enjoyed, was when the Kings of France and England were engaged in war at a distance; and the Troubadours, their national poets, were accustomed to sing of the joys which arose "when the truce between the Easterlings and the people of Touraine (the French and English) was broken."

The Aquitanians who had the advantages of an earlier civilization, hated the foreigners who sought to subdue and oppress them; but a turbulent natural agitation, and an inordinate love of novelty and movement, which no considerations of worldly wisdom or prudence seemed capable of repressing, impelled them incessantly to be dependant on allies which they abhorred, to settle not only their public affairs, but their domestic quarrels and petty rivalries between chief and chief, village and village, town and town, and province and province. They were brave, and passionately fond of war, not from any love of conquest or acquisition, or even from patriotism, but simply from a craving for excitement, and the romantic and poetical accompaniments of martial strife. They loved the bustle and turmoil, the haste, the fears, the hopes, and the despair of the battle-field, to see arms gleaming in the sun, to hear horses neighing in the wind, and to catch the spirit-stirring tones of the bugle when it was calling to the picturesque exercises of chivalry. At the bidding of a fair lady they were always more ready to fly to the crusades, under the banner of the Pope, for whom they entertained little respect, and to risk their lives against the Saracens, a people whom of all others they most resembled in morals, and in ardent temperament, than to keep steady watch and ward, and to ply the contrivances of commerce for improving their resources, or preserving their position, in their own land. To the light gaiety of their character and the possession of a lively and graceful imagination, they united a taste for the arts, and for all luxurious enjoyments. They had, moreover, strong genius, great skill in science, and considerable wealth, derived from the richness and fertility of their soil and climate, rather than from any plodding industry among their merchants or manufacturers. Nature in short had

bestowed upon them every boon that she could confer on man, with the exception of steadiness of will, political prudence, and a spirit of union, which, had they understood and acted upon as compatriots, adopting at the same time a system of mutual defence, based upon the common weal of their country, they might long have resisted all the enemies that combined to injure them: but missing this necessary knowledge, and wanting the principles which that alone could impart, they lost their independence, their riches, their civilisation, and their poetry. Even their beautiful language—the second that bore the name of Roman (*Romans—romance*) and which was as polished as the Latin from which it was derived, and more musical, after being the medium of spreading the melody of recreated verse throughout Europe, gave place in their own mouths to a foreign idiom, the very accentuation of which was repugnant to them; while their national and vernacular tongue, which was that of their ancient liberty and glory—the language of all the genuine poetry of the middle ages,—languished and sank, till, in the present day, it is preserved only in ancient Troubadour ballads, and in the patois of day labourers and servant maids.

The peace which had been concluded at Whitsuntide, 1160, between the kings of England and France did not last many months. In October of the same year, Constance, the French Queen, died in giving birth to a second daughter, without leaving male issue, and Louis, anxious for an heir,—his children being excluded by the laws of the Franks, which prohibited female succession,—within a fortnight after her decease, married a third wife—Adelais, niece of the late English King, Stephen, and sister of the Counts of Blois, of Champagne and of Sancerre. Henry was extremely mortified and exasperated at this alliance, which threatened not only to detach from him the relatives and connexions of the new queen, but to interfere with the hopes which he had indulged, of acquiring the throne on the death of Louis—notwithstanding the Salique law—in behalf of his son Henry, as husband of the young princess Margaret. He accordingly, in token of defiance, and in testimony of his rage, hastened to celebrate the nuptials of the boy and his infant bride—then of the respective ages of seven and three years—and this done, he prevailed on the Knights Templars to deliver up to him the castles and towns,—the lady's dower,—which had been placed in their keeping till the marriage should be regularly solemnized. Louis instantly published a declaration of war, and issued a sentence of expulsion and exile against the Templars—the grand Master of whose order is believed to have been bribed by Henry to betray his trust. Hostilities, however, were of short duration. The barons, on either side, seeing that they had nothing to gain,—even to pay the costs of their armament—by these frequent ebullitions of royal choler, gave no cordial support to their chiefs, who were consequently glad, after assaulting a few castles, and making some parade of chivalry, to accept the mediation of the Pope for a peace, and to renew the conditions of the violated treaty.

At that time there were two Popes, and of course two Antipopes—Victor IV and Alexander III. It was the latter who was recognised by the French and English Sovereigns, and to whose friendly offices they were consequently indebted for restoring the good understanding between them, which the marriage of Louis had interrupted. Victor was supported by the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, and through his influence and the good will of the Italians generally, that Pontiff was established in the christian capital; while his competitor, driven to the North of the Alps, was compelled to exert his infallibility in a narrower sphere, and with considerably less of lustre, of pageantry, and of the adjuncts of sainted memories and holy relics, than the successors of St. Peter had for ages been accustomed to. After excommunicating each other, and hurling from each side sundry sentences of eternal perdition against all the partisans of the opposed “usurper and pretender,” the matter was finally accommodated, but not till some time after the death of Victor, by the recognition of the pretensions of Alexander by the Emperor and the Italian princes. In this dispute the part borne by Louis seems neither to have been very important nor sincere,—probably from a notion that he had little to be grateful for in the reconciliation effected through papal agency with the King of England. While pretending to second the claims of Alexander, the king entered into a correspondence with Victor and Frederic, and even proceeded to St. Jean de Losne to hold a conference with the Emperor concerning the means of terminating the schism to the advantage of the Imperial candidate; but his correspondent failing to meet him, he hastened back to renew his amity with Alexander, at Toucy on the Loire, where he assisted his ancient rival Henry, who had arrived at the same place just before him, to perform the office of equerry to his holiness, by holding his stirrup and bridle while he mounted his mule.

In peace as in war, however, such was the preponderating influence of the English sovereign on the continent, that, but for a quarrel which arose about this time between him and his former councillor and favourite, Thomas à Becket, and prevented the king from engaging in any new undertaking, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Louis, if not absolutely deposed, would have been speedily reduced to the condition of a mere “*roi fainéant*.” This clerical quarrel and the successive misfortunes and vexations which afterwards beset Henry and engrossed his attention for the rest of his days, seem almost to have been providentially interposed for the salvation of France. Henry, in fact, in judging of Becket as an instrument of his will, had overreached and deceived himself. He had elevated a man of Saxon race—the son of an obscure London merchant—first to be his boon companion and friend, then his ambassador, next his chancellor and chief minister, and finally to be primate of all England, on the supposition that the man’s subserviency would be commensurate with the magnitude of the favours conferred on him. He had hoped to find in à Becket a willing agent of popular extortion and oppression, as he had found him a pliable and

ready instrument of humiliating the prelates and barons of the realm in his capacity of chancellor. But herein lay the king's mistake, Thomas, a true Saxon in mind, in soul, and in sympathy, rejoiced in afflicting the great men of the nation, who were all Normans, and consequently the enemies and oppressors of his race; but, the moment he became Archbishop of Canterbury, instead of lending his aid or countenance to the king towards diminishing the privileges of the inferior clergy and the people, who, it may be necessary to remark, were English, or Saxons, he hesitated not to declare that he would be the guardian and protector of his kinsfolk and countrymen.

The rage of Henry, on perceiving his error, was equal to his disappointment. He at once, therefore, commenced against the primate a regular system of personal attacks, insults and vexations, which ended only with the life of his victim. He deprived à Becket of all the offices which he still held under the jurisdiction of the crown; and he appointed a dissolute and depraved Norman monk, who had laid aside the cowl in his own country, to the post of Abbot of St. Augustine's, merely for the purpose apparently of being gratified by the man's refusal to take the oath of canonical obedience to the archbishop, which had been imposed upon all preceding abbots since the date of the conquest. Thomas, in turn, demanded restitution of all that his church had been deprived of since William the Bastard's invasion; and this, which tended to call in question the legal right of every Norman to his acquisitions, aroused and alarmed the noble and wealthy throughout the kingdom. Prescriptive rights were pleaded by Gilbert de Clare when summoned to surrender the castle and lands at Tonbridge, which he held under a grant made to his grandfather by William I. from the estates of the see of Canterbury; but à Becket's brief and plain answer, that "he knew of no prescription for injustice, and that what had been seized without right must be restored," puzzled and confounded his opponents, who declared that the soul of Harold animated the body of him whom they had themselves contributed to place in authority over them. Irritation and retaliation proceeded, till, in the end, the primate bearded the king to his face and in the face of all his nobles, by flatly refusing to yield obedience to a number of novel regulations concerning the affairs of the church, which Henry sought to impose upon the clergy as the ancient constitutions and customs of the kingdom—among which was a law, forbidding the ordination as priests, without the consent of the lords of the manors in which they dwelt, of all such persons as, in the Norman tongue, were called *naifs*, or knaves (natives); that is to say, of all the original race of inhabitants, or Saxons, whose name, howsoever used, was synonymous with *serf*. The king upon this, seems to have resolved on proceeding to extremities against à Becket; and thenceforth inflicted upon him the most petty-minded insults, the most flagrant wrongs and the most oppressive, grinding, and sordid acts of tyranny that he or his flatterers could devise. The animus of this royal persecution is fully disclosed in the language made use of by Henry with reference to it;—"Either I will

cease to be king," said he, "or this man shall cease to be archbishop." The personal liberty, and even the life of the primate was threatened by the sovereign and his Norman adherents—among whom were Roger, the courtly archbishop of York, Gilbert Foliot, bishop of London, and Robert de Melun, bishop of Hereford, whose names sufficiently testify their extraction. As the Pope, however, had been appealed to by both parties in the contest, and à Becket had the good will of all the common people and the humbler clergy, and as Louis of France was intently watching to take advantage of any breach which might arise between Henry and his subjects, the king was induced, upon mature reflection, to stop short of full vengeance for the moment, and to issue a sentence of deposition against his adversary, until the decision of the sovereign pontiff concerning his "perjury and treason" should be declared. The archbishop, to avert the consequences of the deadly hostility publicly manifested against him by the Norman nobles and knights, now fled to France, where he arrived about the beginning of December, 1165; and the king, thus foiled of his purpose to punish and humiliate him further, immediately issued an edict of banishment against all the kindred of à Becket, whether in the ascending or descending line; by which, as well as the able-bodied, old men, pregnant women, and even children in the cradle were condemned, without being guilty of the least offence, to expatriation. The proscription list on the occasion contained no less than four hundred names. And at the same time, all the effects and property of the primate, his retainers, servants and presumed adherents, were sequestered and disposed of among the partisans of the king; and John, bishop of Poitiers, being merely suspected of friendship towards the exile, received poison from an unknown hand, and escaped death by mere chance.

From the monastery of St. Bertin near Namur, in Flanders, where Thomas had found an asylum, he sent messengers to the court of Louis VII., and to Pope Alexander III., then residing at Sens, to apprise them of the particulars of his quarrel with Henry, and of his flight. The answers from each were highly favourable to his hopes, and flattering to his constancy. The splendid abbey of Pontigny in Burgundy was offered to him as a retreat; and the Pope to reassure and invigorate him, reinvested him with his archiepiscopal dignity; and thus, *à priori*, decided the question that the conduct of Henry in depriving him of his see had been illegal and arbitrary. Alexander, it is clear, did not well understand the natural difference in the quality of blood between a Saxon man, the scion of an enslaved race, and a divine-right Norman aristocrat.

Henry, having heard of the reception of his enemy, and having besides sustained considerable reverses in an attack which he conducted in person against the Welsh people, and which were ascribed to the wrath of Heaven against the violator of the church, repaired in 1166 to France, determined if possible to bring the controversy to an end, and to restore the lustre of his tarnished reputation. Becket, however, did not give the king long leisure

to consider his measures, or to conciliate allies. In the month of May he quitted Pontigny, and hastening to Vezelay, went straight to the church there on the great festival of the Ascension, and mounting the pulpit, "with bell, book, and candle," pronounced a solemn anathema and excommunication against all the upholders of the constitutions of Clarendon, the detainers of the sequestered property of the church of Canterbury, and every person, of whatever rank, who should continue to imprison or persecute, on his account, either priest or layman. This was a blow for which Henry, daring as he was, seems to have been wholly unprepared, and the effect of the intelligence thereof upon him was such as, from his previous conduct, could scarcely have been expected. He was seized with a fit of sudden and frantic fury. He exclaimed that his opponents sought to slay both his soul and his body; and that he was so unfortunate as to have none about him but traitors, or they would have delivered him ere this from the insupportable annoyance of one man. He then dashed his cap on the ground, unbuckled his baldric, threw off his clothes, pulled off the silken coverlet of his bed, and rolling upon it in the presence of all his chiefs, tore therefrom, with his teeth, the flocks of wool and hair with which it was stuffed. On recovering his senses in some degree, he dictated letters to the Pope, to the King of France, and to the monks of Pontigny, imploring the peace of the two first, and threatening the last, that if his banished archbishop should return and find shelter among them, he would confiscate all the estates belonging to their order—the Cistercian—throughout his numerous and extensive dominions. The monks seem to have been affrighted, and Becket, to save them from injury, removed at once from Burgundy to Sens, where a new asylum was provided for him by Louis, "one of the purest gems in whose diadem was the protection of exiles against their persecutors." The conduct of the Pope on this occasion, seems to have been a re-enactment of the part which the French king had played towards himself, in his long and painful dispute with the Emperor Frederic, and his rival, Victor. He wrote to Henry, that he was willing to give him full satisfaction, and promising to depute to him two legates extraordinary, with power to absolve all whom the English primate had excommunicated; but, begging at the same time that the contents of his letters might not be made known to any living soul: and to Becket he wrote, requesting that he would use his pious endeavours to prevail on the Count of Flanders to grant some alms to the suffering church of Rome, in return for the care he had taken to choose legates who were entirely favourable to the cause of the oppressed prelate.

This furious dispute, which, being fomented ever and anon by Louis, led to disturbances and revolts in Britany, Maine, Poitou, and Anjou, against the authority of Henry, did not terminate till the end of July in the year 1170, when the two kings having discovered that their mutual interests required an interval of peace and good understanding between them, agreed to hold a conference between Freteval and La Ferté-Bernard, at which the grievances

of Thomas à Becket were to be heard and redressed. At the repeated and earnest solicitations of the French sovereign, his nobles, and the clergy, the Saxon archbishop at last, reluctantly and with an ill grace, consented to submit himself to Henry, and to accept the pretence of a reconciliation; in which the king could not even so far dissemble his evil intentions towards his triumphant adversary, as to bestow on him the kiss of peace, which was customary between persons who had amicably settled the differences which had held them at enmity. Thomas was not deceived by this hollow truce. He knew the king better and more intimately than most men; and when, after having received reinvestiture of his archbishopric, and been furnished with letters, authorizing the return of himself and his friends to England, he went to take leave of the king, preparatory to setting out, he fixed his keen eyes on those of Henry, and said to him with expressive solemnity, "I believe that we shall never meet again." "Take you me, then," asked the king, warmly, guessing—conscience stricken—the purport of his words, "for a traitor?" Becket bowed and departed, and forthwith embarked for England, where he arrived on the 1st of December, 1170.

The conduct of the Normans on the landing of the primate was not such as to remove the impression of Becket that a design had been formed against his life, and that he had been permitted to return to his native land, merely, that a better opportunity might be afforded for his assassination. At the same time, however, his own bearing was little calculated to conciliate his former foes. The nobles openly avowed their deadly hostility towards the up-start Saxon; and the archbishop, on his part, after submitting to many outrages and insults in silence, excommunicated the Archbishop of York, and suspended all the rest of the bishops, who, during his absence and since his return, had taken part against him, and justified the detention of the goods and revenues of his see. The aggrieved at once had recourse to the king, representing Thomas as "A man who had set England on fire, marching about with troops of horse and armed foot, prowling round the fortresses, and trying to get himself received within them." Henry, who was still in Normandy, was seized, on the receipt of this fresh intelligence, with one of those fits of uncontrollable fury to which he had become subject, and exclaimed, "How! a wretch who hath eaten my bread—a beggar that first came to my court on a limping pack-horse, carrying all his baggage at his back—shall he dare to insult his king and the royal family, and to trample upon the whole kingdom, and not one of the dastardly knights, whom I feed at my table, will deliver me from this turbulent priest!" Four knights who heard these significant words, forthwith bound themselves by oath to avenge their sovereign; and, setting out for England, they reached Canterbury three days after Christmas. It was not, however, until the 29th, that they could muster sufficient courage to execute their purpose, being afraid of a commotion among the populace, by whom Becket was idolized, both for his sanctity and for the sufferings which he had sustained in supporting the rights of the

people and of the poor clergy against the Normans. But, on that day, at the hour of vespers, the murderers entered the cathedral while the archbishop was at the altar, and, after a brief parley, they fell upon him with their weapons, and with many blows, one of which clove his skull, they sacrificed him to the vengeance of the rulers of the land. Becket was regarded thenceforward as a martyr and a saint; and a multitude of miracles having been wrought at his tomb, he, about two years afterwards, received from the Pope the honour of canonization.

It was in vain that Henry and his partisans strove to stem the torrent of indignation which burst forth against the perpetrators of this foul and barbarous act—not in England alone but over the whole continent. In vain they heaped the epithets of traitor, perjurer, wretch, Pharaoh, and Barabbas upon the lifeless prelate; the king, for his participation in the crime, was everywhere loudly condemned, and everywhere his power and influence were on the instant sensibly diminished. Louis, of course, sought to fan the flame which he hoped would destroy his most formidable enemy. He wrote to the Pope imploring him to draw the sword of St. Peter against “that horrible persecutor of God, who surpassed Nero in cruelty, Julian in apostacy, and Judas in treachery:” and had not Henry bowed to the storm, or had no schism existed in the church at the time, the consequences might have been of the most fearful kind. On the king’s protestations of innocence, however, and his expression of the utmost grief and horror against the slayers of the martyr, but more especially at the sight of his golden offers of atonement, Alexander was induced to exempt Henry from special censure in the matter, and contented himself with merely excommunicating in general terms all the actors and abettors of the assassination. Nevertheless, the perseverance of Becket was crowned with success, even after his death. The king was compelled to abolish the obnoxious constitutions of Clarendon, to consent that appeals might in future be made to the Pope, to restore all the lands and possessions belonging to the deceased primate, his friends and relatives, and to contribute a large sum of money towards the expenses of a war against the Saracens. He felt it necessary also to submit to the humiliation of solemnly swearing in the church of Avranches before a crowd of people, that he had neither ordered nor wished the death of the archbishop; and that when apprised of that event, he had felt more sorrow than joy! In order to carry through his hypocrisy, indeed, Henry, three years afterwards, on revisiting England, went in pilgrimage, barefooted, and fasting from all, save bread and water, to the shrine of his victim, where prostrating himself on the cold stones, and throwing off the upper part of his dress, he submitted to be scourged by all the ecclesiastics—numbering not less than eighty—who happened to be present. The bishops and abbots handled first the knotted cords, and then followed the monks—every one inflicting from three to five lashes—with a light hand it may be presumed; but still the whole scene and ceremony was strange, and such as had never before been seen or heard of.

The quarrel of Henry with the church having been settled, Louis found no opportunity of renewing his hostility against the English sovereign, with the least prospect of success, until the year 1172, when, after procuring his son-in-law Prince Henry to be associated with the old king in the administration of the government, he is said to have persuaded that young man, during a visit which he and his wife Margaret paid to the French court, to demand from his father, the resignation in his favour of either England or Normandy in full sovereignty,—“in order that he and his queen might have the means of supporting their dignity.” Henry, as must have been expected, rejected this unreasonable proposal, and shortly afterwards, the prince, together with his brothers Richard, Count of Poitou, and Geoffrey, Count of Britany, and their mother Queen Eleanor, who, old as she was, seems to have retained all the violent passions of her youth, fled from the Norman court and took refuge in the French territory. Eleanor was captured as she was journeying towards the residence of Louis, her former husband, and being taken back to Henry was committed by him to safe custody in one of his castles, whence with the exception of a few weeks, during which she was brought forth to grace a state pageant, she was not delivered till after the death of her husband—a period of sixteen years. Vexed and enraged at this unfilial conduct, Henry despatched ambassadors to Louis to demand that his fugitive sons should be immediately restored to him; but the King of France, conceiving a prospect of advantage from the family jars of his rival, refused to recognise the envoys in any other capacity than as messengers from the Duke of Normandy, adding, that he knew of no other King of England than his son-in-law who sat beside him, at his right hand, wearing the English crown.

A renewal of war was the inevitable consequence of these proceedings; and a formidable conspiracy was soon organised for the purpose of humbling King Henry, and stripping him of the better part of his dominions. The reward of the French king was not stated in the treaty by which the allies sought to bind each other in furthering their mutual designs; but William, King of Scotland was to receive all that his predecessors had held in Northumberland and Cumberland, Philip, Count of Flanders, was to have the earldom of Kent, with the castles of Dover and Rochester, the Count of Blois was to gain Amboise, and Château-Regnault, with an allowance of five hundred pounds of silver from the revenues of Anjou, the Count of Boulogne was to have a large domain near Lincoln, and the county of Mortain in Normandy; and the inferior chiefs engaged were to have various grants, according to the aid they could afford to the enterprise. At the same time all parties bound themselves by oath to persevere in their undertaking, and never to make peace or truce till they had established their claims. Henry, on his part, seeing that his children and many of his great vassals had deserted him, had recourse to the aid of certain mercenary troops, who were then wandering about Europe in bands,

offering their services to all who might need and be able to pay for them, and who, from the district whence they were chiefly drawn, were called Brabançons. Twenty thousand of these adventurers, whose chief resources were derived from brigandage, knowing that the royal treasury was full, speedily flocked to the king's standard; so that by the month of June, 1173, when hostilities were commenced by a general attack upon Normandy, he was fully prepared for the reception of the invaders; and, in a shorter space than could have been reckoned upon, he drove his enemies from his territories, and forced Louis and the rebellious princes to sue for peace. A conference between the two kings was accordingly held in an extensive plain near Gisors, beneath a large elm, the branches of which hung down to the ground—the spot being that where all diplomatic congresses had taken place between the Kings of France and the Dukes of Normandy from time immemorial. Here, however, new difficulties arose, and the war was resumed; but it was conducted henceforward with such languor on both sides, that nothing save the most insignificant operations gave token of the interruption of public tranquillity; and about the end of the year 1174 a definitive treaty of pacification was signed, which, as regarded France, was not again interrupted during the life of Louis VII. It was at the ratification of this peace that the two kings, grown old and tired of their incessant quarrels and wars, sought to cement their mutual interests by a new family alliance, in which Prince Richard, the son of Henry, (afterwards known as *Cœur de Lion*—the lion-hearted) was betrothed to Alix or Alice—the youngest daughter of Louis by his last wife Adelais of Champagne, who, as her dowry, was to receive the whole territory of the Vexin—the possession of which had for many years been a fertile subject of dispute between France and Normandy. As a guarantee for the faithful execution of the treaty, Alice was delivered into the hands of Henry, to be brought up by him till she should be of a marriageable age, in the same way as her sister Margaret had been, prior to her nuptials with Prince Henry.

In the year 1179, Louis, being in his sixtieth year, and afflicted with palsy, bethought him to associate with him in the regal dignity his only son Philippe, surnamed Auguste, (the Heaven-born) from having been born in August [1165]. The feast of the assumption was fixed for the celebration of the lad's coronation, and the homage of the barons; but almost on the eve of the appointed day, a singular accident occurred to cause the postponement of the ceremony. Philippe being engaged in hunting the wild-boar in the forest of Compiègne with a train of nobles and attendants, was led, in the ardour of the pursuit to a distance from his companions, and became entangled among the intricacies of the pathless wilds. Here, being unable to find a guide to conduct him back to his followers, he was compelled to wander about during the greater part of the night, “commending himself to God, to the blessed virgin Mary, and to

the great St. Denis," till perceiving at a distance a large black man, grovelling before a smothered light, he hastened to the spot and found that it was a charcoal-burner kindling a fire at the mouth of his cabin. This man on the promise of a reward, put the heavy axe which he used in his labour on his shoulder as a means of protection, and led the youth back to the city in safety. But the alarm and fatigue created by his wanderings, and by the sudden appearance of the poor peasant, who, in the darkness, seemed to be calling fire from the earth like a supernatural and malevolent being, so far exhausted and affected him in body and mind, that a dangerous fever ensued, which it was for some time feared would prove fatal. The father, anxious for the preservation of his son, undertook, in his distress, a pilgrimage to the shrine of his old friend à Becket, the miracles performed at which were blazoned, and currently believed, throughout Europe; and of whose intercession Louis was the more readily assured, from remembrance of the protection which he had formerly afforded to the martyr. He was received at Dover by Henry with the utmost magnificence, and after paying his devotions, and making many splendid offerings, at the tomb of the Saint, he hastened to return, and had the satisfaction to learn, on landing at Calais, that his son was perfectly recovered. The sufferings, the agitation of mind, and the mortification of body which the old king had undergone, however, were too much for his age and strength; and, after witnessing the coronation of Philippe, and his marriage with Isabelle of Hainault, he rapidly sunk under the paralytic affection which had long enfeebled him, and expired on the 8th of September, 1180.

Philippe (II.) Auguste, was but fifteen years of age when he ascended the throne. His father had appointed Philippe, Count of Flanders, to be his guardian during his minority: but through some jealousy on the part of the queen mother, her brother the Count of Champagne, and one Clement of Metz, who had been tutor to the young prince, the early years of his reign were disturbed by a quarrel with the Flemings, relative to the possession of Vermandois, which the king claimed in right of his wife, but which her uncle the Count of Flanders was unwilling to relinquish. Henry of England more than once interposed his good offices during this dispute, to prevent hostilities; but, eventually, each party resolved to submit their pretensions to the decision of the sword. The count took the offensive, and invaded France with a powerful army, supplied by the free cities of his principality, who speedily overran and ravaged the whole country between the Somme and the Oise, and penetrated even to Dommartin, a post not more than nine leagues distant from Paris. Thence, however, on the approach of the king with his chivalry, which had flocked to the royal standard the more freely, forasmuch as the nobles were desirous of humbling the pride and curbing the assumption of the bold burghers of Flanders, the invaders retired towards Amiens, where Philippe, pursuing, overtook them. A conference between the belligerent parties ensued, and the terms of a



Philip Augustus benighted.

peace were agreed upon, under which the king was to be placed in quiet possession of the disputed territory.

For two or three years from this period, the young king seems to have been wholly occupied with public measures calculated to ensure the due administration of the law, and to benefit the people generally. By a solemn edict he banished from his court all jesters, jugglers and buffoons; and withheld from the popular troubadours and minstrels the presents of raiment and the largesses of gold, which it had been the custom of his predecessors to bestow upon them. He dismissed the bands of Brabançons which had been retained by his father, and which conducted themselves with the most insolent rapacity towards the inhabitants, and ordered them to quit the kingdom; and, on more than one occasion when they refused, he took the field against them in person, in order to enforce his decree. In a single engagement which they maintained against him, no less than nine thousand of these wandering mercenaries are said to have perished. Then, in order that the populace of large cities and towns might be in future protected against such brigands, and also against their oppressors, the native feudatories, the king compelled the burghers to pave their streets, and to surround their cities with walls and fortifications—a measure, which, though it entailed some expence and labour upon his subjects, had the intended effect of promoting the public tranquillity and security. All the measures of Philippe however, were not equally wise and beneficial. Like most persons of his age, his mind was strongly tinctured with superstition; and, prompted by this and by his necessities, he took part with the priesthood against the Jews who had settled in his dominions, and loosed upon them a fierce persecution, the end of which was, that, after having been stripped of all their property, the harmless offenders were expelled the kingdom. The great crime of the Jews was, the wealth which they had acquired by their industry. The people were constantly exclaiming against them as usurers, extortioners and robbers, and as constantly placing themselves in their power by becoming their debtors. They cried out, with bitterness, against the permission accorded to the Israelites to hold Christians in servitude; yet they were always ready to offer their own bondmen in exchange for the gold which they needed. Even the sacred vessels of many ecclesiastical establishments, had found their way, as security for loans, into the hands of the despised Hebrews; but the pious monks and clergy, notwithstanding, complained that such possession was a desecration of things consecrated to the Lord. It was probably owing to some demand for a debt due from the king himself, that the royal vengeance was kindled against the race of Abraham; since the crown was constantly involved in pecuniary difficulties at this period, and the exchequer was empty: but, however this may be, Philippe, entering into the fanatical spirit of his people, arbitrarily liberated all christian slaves from the servitude of their Jewish masters; declared all debts due from Christians to Jews to be

forfeited, on payment by the debtors of a fifth part of their amount into the royal treasury; confiscated all the immoveable property of the Jews, allowing them merely their moveables and furniture, or the produce thereof when sold, for their travelling expences and future maintenance; and banished them the kingdom—making an exception in favour of such only as professed the christian faith and were baptised.

In 1183, the death of Prince Henry, the eldest son of the King of England, produced a dispute between the latter and Philippe respecting the dower of Margaret, the French king's sister; the restoration of which had been stipulated between Louis VII. and Henry, in case of the event happening which had now occurred. Philippe demanded, and Henry refused, restitution of the castles and estates which had been assigned to the princess by her father; but after several fruitless conferences, held under the elm of Gisors, and when matters began to assume a warlike aspect, Henry purchased a two years' truce by the abandonment of some of the points at issue. Nevertheless, although thus apparently amicably settled, the quarrel had not been without the most baneful consequences. Philippe, in order to strengthen himself against his powerful rival, had resorted to the ancient arts of his father, and intrigued with the sons of Henry, in such wise as to cause dissension between them and their parent. In the first place, he induced Prince Geoffrey to demand possession of the county of Anjou; and, on the rejection of this request, the prince fled to Paris, and thence issued his ban of war. Being shortly afterwards, however, unhorsed in a tournament, Geoffrey was trampled to death by the horses engaged in the lists; and the tempter then spread his snares for Prince Richard (*Cœur de Lion*) who, on invitation, repaired to the court of Philippe, and was entertained there with the utmost cordiality. Such, indeed, was the assumed friendship of the French king for his guest, that according to a contemporary historian, "the princes daily dined at the same table, ate from the same dish, and at night slept in the same bed." Henry, foreseeing that this friendship boded no good to himself, sent frequent messages to recall his son; but without effect: and in the month of January, 1187, a new conference took place under the old elm, in which a formal reconciliation and peace was agreed upon.

At that time the christians were suffering great reverses in the Holy Land. Jerusalem, together with the wood of the true cross, had again fallen into the hands of the Saracens, then commanded by a chief of distinguished courage and talent, named Salah-ed-Deen, or Saladin. The reigning Pope, according to the general rumour, had died of grief at the afflicting news; and missionaries were preaching throughout Europe a new crusade against the infidels. William, Archbishop of Tyre, one of the most eloquent men of the time, was present at the interview of the kings, and by his address and exhortations prevailed upon them to lay aside all differences between themselves, and to assume the cross for the redemption of Palestine. They

each accordingly took an oath to that effect, and in token of their engagement, received from the archbishop a cross of cloth to attach to their vestments; that of the King of England being white, and that of Philippe red. Many of the barons present took the same vow, and all prepared with eagerness for the expedition which had already proved fatal to so many of their country and creed.

Even this agreement, however, of which one of the most solemn conditions was that no party engaged, should bear arms against another christian until he had been to the Holy Land, was speedily interrupted by a quarrel concerning the personal interests of Raymond de St. Gilles, Count of Toulouse, and Richard, Count of Poitiers. The King of France, pursuing the policy of his father, joined his uncle Raymond, and made an attack upon the strong castles of Berry which were held of the King of England. The war soon extended along the whole frontier of the countries ruled by the two sovereigns. Many towns were taken and retaken on each side, many farms burned, and vineyards uprooted, until at length each of the combatants, wearied with the profitless struggle, simultaneously resolved to treat for peace. The great elm was again the place of meeting, [September 1188] but, as nothing was then agreed upon, and as some insult was said to have been offered by the followers of Henry to the followers of Philippe, the latter in his rage ordered the tree to be cut down—swearing by all the saints of France, which was his favourite oath, that never more should a conference of princes be held in that place. A new parley, nevertheless, took place about a month afterwards, at Bons-Moulins, in Normandy, when the French king made proposals, in which Prince Richard's interest was so interwoven with his own, that they seemed to be the result of some secret compact previously concluded between that young man and himself. He demanded that his youngest sister Alice, who had been affianced to Richard in infancy, should be given to him now as his bride. This was touching the old king on a tender point. His conduct, with regard to the young princess, had already incurred great scandal throughout Europe. After having long kept her in his court, as a sort of hostage, he is believed to have become enamoured of her person, and to have gratified his passion by making her his mistress after the death of the fair Rosamond. He had gone so far, it is added, as to have solicited from the court of Rome a divorce from his old Queen Eleanor, in order that he might exalt Alice to her place beside him on the throne. But, affecting ignorance of these matters, Philippe urged the immediate conclusion of the marriage between his sister and Richard; and insisted likewise, that his future brother-in-law should be declared heir to the kingdom of England, and all the other states of Henry, and receive, as such, the homage of the barons of England, Normandy, and Aquitaine. Henry refused to comply with these terms; and Richard upon this, turning from his father, put his hands between those of the king of France, declared himself the vassal of his friend, and took the oath of fealty to him for

Normandy, Brittany, Aquitaine, Poitou, Maine and Anjou. Philippe, in return, conferred upon Richard as a fief, the towns of Châteauroux and Issoudun.

Henry, violently agitated, rushed from this scene of rebellion, and mounting his horse rode to Saumur to prepare for the farther prosecution of the war; but age and grief had bowed his frame, and stricken his mind; and after inducing the Pope's legate to intercede vainly in his behalf with his son, and finding himself deserted by nearly all his continental vassals, he was reduced to the necessity, not merely of suing for peace, but of offering beforehand to accept any terms which Philippe and Richard might impose on him.

Another meeting consequently took place between the monarchs, in a plain between Tours and Azay-sur-Cher, which it appears was not attended by Richard, who remained at a short distance to learn the issue of the negotiations. Here, while the kings were conversing together in the open field, on horseback, a loud peal of thunder was heard, though the sky appeared cloudless, and the lightning fell between them, but without doing them any harm. They separated in great terror, but after a brief space met again. Then a second peal of thunder, more awful than the first, instantly rolled over their heads. The state of Henry's health and circumstances rendered him more nervous than his young and then triumphant rival. He dropped the reins, and reeling in his saddle, would have fallen from his horse had not his attendants supported him. The conference was broken off, and the humiliating conditions of peace, reduced to writing, were sent to his quarters for signature.

When the articles had been read one by one to the king, as he lay suffering on his bed, he raised himself to ask the French deputies for a list of the vassals whom he was required to pardon for having deserted him, and espoused the quarrel of his son Richard. The list was accordingly read, and the first name was that of his best-beloved son John, of whose treachery he had hitherto been kept in ignorance. He started forward when he heard it, and, glaring wildly round, exclaimed, "Is it true that John, the child of my heart—he whom I have cherished more than all the rest, and for love of whom I have drawn on mine own head all these troubles—hath verily betrayed me?" "Even so," replied the deputies. "Then," said Henry, falling back upon the bed, and turning his face to the wall, "henceforth let all things go as they may, I have no farther care for myself nor for the world." A few moments afterwards Prince Richard approached the bedside, to solicit the kiss of peace which was to close the treaty. The king gave it him with a look of apparent calmness; but as Richard was going away he heard his father mutter—"Oh! that God would grant me to live till I had avenged myself of thee!" The dutiful son repeated these words, on his return to the French camp, to Philippe and his courtiers, who all laughed aloud, and made merry jests concerning the good peace which had been so happily concluded between such affectionate relatives. A few days afterwards, Henry, feeling

that he grew hourly worse, caused himself to be conveyed to Chinon, where, with a bitter curse upon the sons he must leave behind him, he yielded his



last breath on the 6th of July, 1189. All the bishops, priests, barons and knights, who had attended on him, departed the moment after his death; and the menial attendants, after stripping the royal body, and carrying off all the valuables the house contained, followed the example of their superiors. Henry was buried, with little more of decent ceremony than the conqueror, in the abbey of Fontevrault.

Preparations for the long-contemplated crusade, undertaken by the French and English sovereigns, were now made with all despatch by Philippe and Richard, who undertook to fulfil the vow of his father. Each demanded and obtained from his subjects a tenth part both of their heritable and moveable property, as an aid towards the collection and equipment of an army; and many acts of grievous injustice and oppression were perpetrated in the extortion of this heavy tax. At length, however, all things being in readiness,—the regency of France being vested in the person of the king's mother and his uncle, and guardians appointed for his son Louis, then but three years old—Philippe received the Oriflamme, and proceeded to Lyons, the appointed rendezvous of the French and English armies, about midsummer in the year 1190. Here the two kings separated, with the

understanding that they should meet again at Messina, and thence pursue their pilgrimage in company. Philippe proceeded across the Alps to Genoa, and Richard, after tarrying awhile at Marseilles, for the fleet in which he intended to sail straight to Sicily, was fain to hire some Genoese craft, and proceed to Genoa also. Thence both armies embarked, after a short stay, and, landing at Messina, remained there in company for the winter.

It was during the abode of the two kings in Sicily, that the friendship which had so long subsisted between them was first seriously interrupted. Philippe seems to have foreseen that this would be the case; and, immediately after the arrival of Richard, had got his fleet ready, and hoisted sail for the East; but being driven back by contrary winds and storms, he was compelled to remain in the close neighbourhood, which, considering the almost hereditary hostility borne towards each other by the French and English knights and soldiers, could not fail to be alike disagreeable and dangerous to all parties.

The kingdom of Sicily, which then comprised Calabria and Apulia, and the parts of lower Italy, now included in the Neapolitan realm, was, at that time under the sceptre of Tancred, an illegitimate relative of William the Good, the grandson of the great Ruggiero, founder of the kingdom. This prince received the Crusaders with the most frank and generous hospitality—assigning to Philippe splendid quarters, for himself and his barons, within the city; and to Richard and his nobles, a mansion and grounds without the walls. Richard, however, had an old grudge against Tancred, for having withheld from his sister Joan, the widow of the late King William, her splendid dower. This, from the day of his landing, seems to have influenced the conduct of the Lion-heart, and to have rendered him reckless as to the terms on which he might stand with the Sicilians; perhaps it even prompted him to commit some outrages of which he stands accused, in order to produce a rupture, and through that a settlement of differences. At all events, he proceeded at once to treat the Islanders with the most undisguised scorn. On one occasion, hearing the cry of a hawk issuing from the cottage of a husbandman, who in England and Normandy would not have been permitted to keep such a bird, he entered the house, and seizing the hawk, was about to carry it away, when the countryman resisted, and calling to his neighbours for assistance, raised such a commotion, that the king, after breaking his sword against a club which was raised against him, was compelled to take to his heels—pursued by a shower of sticks and stones from the enraged peasants. A short time afterwards, seeing on the verge of the strait of Messina, a convent of Greek monks, well situated for a storehouse, he sent a party of soldiers to drive out the lawful occupiers, and to take possession in his name. This insolence enraged the people, who rose against the English, and shutting the gates of Messina, refused to grant admittance to Richard or his followers. The king repaired to the palace of Tancred to demand vengeance; and, for the moment, the tumult was appeased by the inter-

ference of that monarch; but, a few days afterwards, a number of the citizens, provoked afresh by the licentiousness of Richard's soldiers, assembled on the heights overhanging their quarters, and made an assault upon the house of one of the king's officers. Richard, who was holding a conference with Philippe, when the news of this attack was brought him, instantly armed himself, and calling to his men, led them in pursuit of the burghers to the very gates of the city. In the conflict which ensued, five English knights and twenty serjeants-at-arms were killed; to avenge whose fall, the king, with his whole force, attacked the town, made himself master of the fortifications, and caused his banner to be hoisted upon all the towers around the walls. Philippe, who had hitherto remained a quiet spectator of the conflict, now came forward, and demanded on behalf of Tancred, that the English banners should be taken down. Richard, on this request, took down his own flag, but, instead of restoring that of his host, he put the town into the keeping of the Knights Templars, until he should receive satisfaction for the injuries inflicted on his troops by the citizens of Messina. Tancred, affrighted at the bold bearing of the English king, submitted to all that was demanded of him; and not only took an oath himself, but made all his great officers swear by his soul and theirs, that he and his, on land and sea, would at all times keep faithful peace with the King of England, and all that appertained to him. In proof of his fidelity, he is said, one day, to have put into the hands of Richard a letter, which had been written by King Philippe, calling the English sovereign a false traitor, accusing him of entertaining hostile designs against Sicily; and offering to assist Tancred and his people to expel the arrogant intruder from the island. Richard, after an explosion of the fiercest wrath, intermingled with many oaths that he never had been, and never would be, false to Tancred, ventured to express a doubt whether Philippe, his liege and sworn comrade in the crusade, could have been guilty of such baseness as to write the letter; but Tancred declared that the letter was assuredly genuine, and that it had been delivered to him by the Duke of Burgundy, one of the French king's trustiest vassals:—at the same time, he offered, should the duke deny the delivery, to maintain the truth against him in person, in the lists.

Richard, returning to his camp, met Philippe with a gloomy and scowling brow; and a few days after, during one of the frequent altercations which occurred between them, in consequence of the incessant brawls of their followers, he suddenly produced the letter, and asked the French king if he recognised it. Philippe at once pronounced it to be a vile forgery; and changing defence into attack, told his ally that he merely sought a cause of quarrel, as a pretext for not marrying the princess Alice, to whom he had been so long betrothed. "But know for certain," added he, "that if you reject her, and take another wife, I shall ever be an enemy to you and yours."—"Your sister," quietly returned Richard, "I cannot marry; for it is a matter of public notoriety that Henry my father had a son by her,

which, if you require it, I can prove by numerous good witnesses." These witnesses it appears were subsequently produced, and satisfactorily proved the dishonour of Alice, whose cause Philippe thereupon consented to abandon for a pension of ten thousand livres, to be paid for five successive years; and the promise of Richard was given that she and her dower should be restored to her brother, immediately on their return from the Holy land. This, according to a contemporary historian, was the price at which Philippe granted his licence to his rival to marry whatsoever woman he might choose.

A perfect peace and reconciliation, however, was not yet, nor ever more, established between the two monarchs and their respective followers. An affair, which in itself was utterly trivial and insignificant, was sufficient to create, a few days after, the nominal conclusion of their differences and disputes, a new and marked coolness between them. Richard, while riding with a company of French and Norman knights through the streets of Messina, chanced to pass a peasant leading an ass, laden with a bundle of reed-like wands to market. The cavaliers, in sportive humour, unladed the ass on the instant, and each, armed with a willow rod, as if it had been a lance, formed in array, and rushed against each other in mimic combat. Among those thus engaged was a French baron named William de Barres, the strongest and bravest of all the chivalry of France. Richard selected him for his personal antagonist—partly because of his reputation for superior courage and activity, and partly, it may be, on account of an ancient grudge which he owed to De Barres, for having unhorsed him, during the last war, while fighting, on some solitary occasion, by the side and under the banner of his father, Henry II. The king rushed against his foe with all the force he could muster; but he was received with such cool determination and steady fortitude, that the assailant reeled in his saddle; and, on being attacked in turn by De Barres, his royal mantle was stricken from his shoulders, and he himself was nearly thrown to the earth by the shock. All the ire of Richard was aroused by this humiliation. He drove with real fury against his adversary, and strove to unhorse him by main force; but after a vain struggle he was compelled to withdraw from the contest, leaving the Frenchman triumphant over a king, who, by his followers, had been deemed unmatched for prowess and muscular force. In the bitterness of childish disappointment and rage, the royal despot exclaimed as he retired:—"Begone, sirrah, instantly, from my presence, and let me never see your face again! To thee and thine I swear, henceforth, eternal enmity!" Nothing afterwards would soothe his galled and irritated feelings. His defeat rankled in his mind as though he had been vanquished by an enemy; and such was his obstinate adherence to the resolve he had made not again to meet De Barres, that, when the spring arrived, and all was in readiness for the two armies to pursue their journey, he preferred to let Philippe take the lead in the path of peril—the chosen post of a true knight—and to depart alone for

Palestine, rather than accompany him, and run a risk of hearing the satirical songs which the troubadours had composed on the event of his defeat in the "joust of the reeds."



Richard, it may be added, had another, and probably a more powerful, reason for delaying his embarkation. He had become passionately enamoured of the Princess Berengaria, the beautiful daughter of the King of Navarre, whom he had seen in her own country, a year or two previously to his father's death. This lady, during his stay in Messina, had been brought by his mother, Queen Eleanor, from the foot of the Pyrenees to Reggio, on the Calabrian coast, where she had been kept concealed until the differences between the French and English sovereigns respecting the Lady Alice had been arranged, and, indeed, until after the departure of Philippe, when Richard immediately crossed the straits, took on board his bride, and a few days afterwards set sail for Acre—the point of destination both of the French and English—the city being then, as it had been for nearly two years before, besieged by the christians, who, in their turn, were almost hemmed in by the Saracens, under the mighty Saladin, in their narrow quarters upon the sea-coast.

When Philippe appeared on the shore [13th of April, 1191,] with his succouring army, Saladin was not only in possession of Mount Carmel, but of all the neighbouring heights and passes, which were occupied with an

innumerable horde of Mussulmans, gathered from all the countries of the East for the defence of their dominion and their faith, in the same way as the opposing christians had collected their forces from all parts of Europe for the conquest of what they called the Holy Land. The loss of human life since the place was first invested had been fearful. At the lowest calculation there had perished around the walls by the sword and by the plague, six archbishops, twelve bishops, forty counts and five hundred barons, whose names have been recorded, besides one hundred and fifty thousand—some say three hundred thousand, and the Arab historians swell the number to five or six hundred thousand,—of the “meaner sort of christians, who went to their graves without memorial.” Every thing, in fact, was in a deplorable condition. Guy de Lusignan, who had obtained the crown of Jerusalem upon the death of Baldwin V., was utterly incapable of governing the realm which had devolved upon him; and neither he, nor any of the leaders who had come to range themselves under his banner from Europe, could at all match in talent and enterprise with the present Saracen chief, who, after having subdued Egypt, Damascus and Aleppo, and captured the Holy city, had pushed forward to finish his work by expelling the christians from Acre. The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, who had preceded the kings of England and France in the crusade, had perished on his road, in the waters of the Cydnus, and a remnant only of his troops, after enduring almost incredible hardships, and sustaining a loss of nearly one hundred and forty thousand men on their march, had reached Palestine—dispirited, without discipline or courage, and needing rather the attentions of friends in easy circumstances, than being in a condition to assist in quelling an enemy, flushed with recent triumphs, and enjoying the advantage of being in their own land, surrounded by friends and inured to the climate. The arrival of Philippe and his host, therefore, naturally re-animated the drooping spirits of the soldiers of the cross, who resumed their labours in the siege with renewed hope and ardour; and, in a short time, a strong mount being constructed, and the works advancing day by day, the Saracens offered to capitulate on the same terms as they had granted to the christians when the place was taken. Philippe rejected the conditions, and tried to carry the walls by storm, but being foiled in his attempt, he resolved to await the arrival of Richard, who was daily expected to share in the honours and the dangers of the capture.

The fleet of the English king, which since its departure from Sicily had been engaged in the conquest of Cyprus—a christian territory—cast anchor before Acre on the 8th of June, and was hailed with an astounding clangour of martial music from the shore. Richard found every thing in confusion. Conrad of Montferrat, under the protection of Philippe, had openly advanced pretensions to the crown of Jerusalem, against Guy its present possessor, and each competitor was believed to be intriguing for the attainment of his personal objects, not only with the different Christian

leaders in the besieging camp, but with the Saracens themselves. The Lion-heart at once tried to rectify this; but his interference produced another quarrel with Philippe, and their squabbles protracted operations for several weeks, when, perceiving the necessity of concert and co-operation, a brief reconciliation was effected between them; and Saladin, seeing vigorous preparations at last on foot for a combined assault, and the garrison being exhausted and desperate, proposed to surrender almost at discretion. The lives of the Saracens were to be spared on condition of their restoring the wood of the true cross, paying a ransom of two hundred thousand pieces of gold, and setting at liberty fifteen hundred christians whom they held in captivity. On some delay, however, which seems to have unavoidably taken place in the fulfilment of these terms by Saladin, a sanguinary butchery of Mussulman prisoners was ordered by Richard, in which not less than two thousand six hundred men were coolly massacred by the English soldiers, while an equal number were murdered in the quarters of the French. Philippe had no personal share in the infamy of this wanton and barbarous act; which, indeed, does not appear to have taken place till after he had quitted the country.

At length, part of the stipulations having been complied with, the crusaders entered Acre in triumph, and Saladin, evacuating all his positions in the neighbourhood, retired into the interior of the country. The standards of the two kings were raised side by side, with equal honours, on the ramparts; but Richard selected the best house in the city for the accommodation of himself and his family, and left Philippe to put up with inferior quarters, or to the alternative, which he preferred, of fixing his abode with the Templars.

Constant disputes with Richard, whose arbitrary will could brook neither contradiction nor remonstrance, and ill-health of some standing, which was aggravated by the scorching sun of the East, now determined Philippe to abandon the Holy Land and return to Europe. On announcing his intention, Richard readily released him from the vow he had formerly made to continue his aid to the enterprise till Jerusalem should be restored to the Christians, on his agreeing to leave ten thousand of his followers, under the immediate command of the Duke of Burgundy, at Acre, and his taking an oath that he would not make war upon any part of the territories of the English king, nor attack any of his vassals or allies, till at least forty days after the return of Richard from Palestine. There arose, nevertheless, a general outcry against what was called the desertion of the French king, the moment his intention to return was made publicly known, and when he and his train, in three Genoese galleys, put to sea, they were followed by the hisses and curses of the "mob of all nations" who witnessed their departure.

It is clear, from the terms of the oath exacted by Richard, that he was not altogether free from apprehension concerning the good faith of Philippe; and the conduct of the latter, on reaching Europe, more than justified every suspicion of his perfidy. The moment he landed in Italy he applied to Pope

Celestine III. to release him, by dispensation, from his solemn engagement to respect the dominions of his rival; and, although the Pontiff refused to sanction so flagrant a violation of truth and honesty, he had no sooner re-entered Paris [December 27th, 1191,] than he commenced active preparations for an attack upon Normandy, and propagated a number of false and scandalous rumours concerning the conduct of Richard in Palestine, for the purpose of lessening the influence of his name, and detaching from him the sympathies of the various princes of Europe; and of loosening the hold which the Lion-heart had obtained, notwithstanding his many and glaring defects of character, upon the affections of his subjects. Among other things, it was affirmed that the English sovereign had constantly maintained a treacherous intercourse with Saladin; that he had conspired with the Saracens for the ruin of Gaza, Joppa and Ascalon; that he had made war upon the christian Emperor of Cyprus, and after sending that prince prisoner to Tripoli, had taken his daughter, and retained her in degrading captivity, as a menial attendant upon Queen Berengaria; and finally, that he had instigated the chief of a Persian tribe of fanatics, called assassins, to procure the death of Philippe himself. To these groundless charges was subsequently added another, which did not, however, originate in Europe, that Richard had leagued with the "Old Man of the Mountains,"—the assassin leader—to murder Conrad, Marquis of Montferrat; an event which had occurred immediately after the general recognition of that claimant's title to the throne of Jerusalem by the crusaders, and while preparations were being made for his coronation. These base insinuations were not lost. Prince John, the brother of Richard, a true Plantagenet, sought to take advantage of the accusations against his sovereign, to supplant him, and to set aside the better-founded claims to the crown of his nephew Prince Arthur—the only son of Geoffrey and Constance of Britany—who had been already declared the king's heir, in the event of Richard's death without issue. For this purpose, John readily entered into a friendly correspondence with the French king; and even offered to accept the degraded Princess Alice—his father's concubine—in marriage, and to put Philippe in possession of certain continental territories which he claimed, on condition of being furnished with French aid to enable him at once to seize the government of England and Normandy.

When the intrigue had become sufficiently advanced for his purpose, Philippe openly exhibited his hostility to Richard, first, by publicly asserting that his illness at Acre had been caused by poison, administered to him by order of the King of England; next, by affecting to be in constant dread of assassination from emissaries sent by Richard and his ally, the "Old Man of the Mountains," of whose departure from the East he pretended to have received secret intelligence, while staying for recreation for a few days at the castle of Pontoise; and, finally, he summoned a general assembly of his barons at Paris, and submitted to them the letters, said to have been

forwarded to him from Palestine, warning him to provide for his personal safety, as his rival had sent to France certain Mussulman agents, commissioned to take him off. Such was the terror which had been stricken into the minds of all christians by floating rumours of the mysterious workings of the assassins—a name then new to the people of Europe—that the most absurd stories concerning them readily obtained credit; and not one of all the noble assembly which Philippe had convoked, ventured to express a doubt concerning the king's danger. Henceforward, therefore, in order to nourish the hatred which he sought to excite among his vassals towards the King of England, or to gain fresh security against all enemies, and even against his own people, he surrounded his person with extraordinary precautions. "Contrary to the custom of his ancestors," say contemporary writers, "he no longer went abroad without an escort of armed men, and, for his greater security, he instituted a corps of body-guards, chosen from among those of his followers who were most devoted to him, and who, for his and their own protection, were armed with maces of iron or brass." It is even added that some persons, who, presuming on their accustomed familiarity, chanced to approach the king inadvertently, ran the risk of their lives. "This regal novelty astonished many, and was remarkably displeasing to all."

The inimical feeling produced by the institution of the body guards, then called serjeants-at-mace, induced Philippe again to call an assembly of the barons and prelates of France [A. D. 1192]; before whom he renewed his former imputations against Richard; and added that it was he who had caused the Marquis of Montferrat to be slain in the streets of Tyre, in broad day, by the assassins whom he had hired to commit the murder. "After all this," he proceeded, "is it strange that I should take more than usual precautions for my safety? But, nevertheless, should the guards I have established appear to you to be either unbefitting or superfluous, say but the words, and I will instantly disband them." The condescension of the king at once gratified and reassured his vassals; who declared that whatever provision for his personal safety might seem good to their suzerain, could not but be deemed fitting and proper to them. The life-guards consequently were kept up; and their institution outlived, for many a century, the belief of the French in the almost magical powers of the "Old Man of the Mountains," and spread, from the Court of Paris, into all the courts of the civilized world. A second, and still more important question to King Philippe, was at the same time propounded to his parliament. "Tell me," he said, "if it be not lawful for me to take good and quick revenge for the manifold wrongs done to me by this perfidious Richard?" The response on this point was still more unanimous than that on the other: "for the French barons were all animated with a long-cherished rancour against the power of the Normans."

Richard, notwithstanding his distance from the scene of these agitations, was soon informed of their existence and nature by some of the bands of pilgrims, who, in their zeal for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, and their

eagerness to participate in the fame and spoil of the English king, were incessantly abandoning their homes, and pouring into the East. His career, since the departure of Philippe, although not invariably fortunate, nor followed by such results as had been expected by the most sanguine of the crusaders, had been the most brilliant of any of the christian heroes, who had gone to waste their energies in Asia,—battling to maintain the substantiality of a dream. He had marched from Acre to Azotus (the Ashdod of scripture), and gained there a complete victory over Saladin and his overwhelming host of Moslems, seven thousand of whom, with thirty-two Emirs of high rank, were left dead upon the field. Pursuing his route thence, and driving before him the dispirited Paynims, he took possession of Jaffa (Joppa); whence he proceeded across the plain of Sharon, and sought to encamp at Ramla (Ramah or Arimathea). Here, however, the strong November winds tore up and rent the tents of the soldiery, and compelled them to remove to Bethany, within twelve miles of Jerusalem. The incessant rains, which now wetted the warriors to the skin, rusted their arms, spoiled their provisions, and rendered the roads impassable, prevented the expedition from proceeding further; and famine, disease, and desertion having ensued to thin their ranks, Richard, with heavy heart, was under the necessity of turning his back upon the holy city—the crowning object of all his labours, and the prize which he had fondly hoped was to seal his knightly fame. His personal prowess in all the romantic encounters which had taken place upon the road, have been recorded by all the historians, minstrels, and romancers of that and long subsequent periods; and seem to belong rather to fable than reality. With a single stroke of his ponderous battle-axe, into the head of which twenty pounds of steel had been wrought, he is reported to have burst open one of the massy posterns of Acre; and at Jaffa, he rushed, but half-armed, into the midst of a *mélée*, in which one of his trusty English barons and some Templars were overpowered by numbers, and so laid about him, crying out “St. George! St. George!” as to drive off the whole of the assailing force. From the camp of Bethany again, he made many excursions against roving bands of Saracens, who sought to entrap all stragglers from the christian entrenchments; and he seldom returned at evening to his quarters without bearing from ten to twenty, and even thirty, grim and gory Moslem heads, suspended round the neck and chest of the gigantic war-horse, which he had brought with him from Cyprus.

As well during the retreat to Ascalon, as in the advance to Bethany, the personal valour and military skill of Richard, seem to have been the chief means of saving the army of the Cross from destruction. Closely pursued by the light flying cavalry of the Turks and Arabs, it was only by the most vigilant exertions, continued night and day, and through the terror inspired by the name and deeds of the King of England, that the Moslems were restrained from making a general attack upon them as they marched, the issue of which, considering the distressed and dispirited condition of the



Richard Cour de Lion.

Christians, could scarcely have failed to prove fatal. Had Richard's temper and talent for conciliation indeed been as estimable as his bravery was conspicuous, the fate of the whole crusade would, in all probability, have been very different; but his arrogant pride, assumption and violence, were his own bane, and by occasioning dissension among his companions, contributed to ruin all that the confederate princes undertook. At Ascalon, his head-strong rashness hurried him into the commission of an outrage which subsequently recoiled with tenfold rigour on himself; and which, under any circumstances, could have had no other effect than that of drawing upon him the hostility of a confirmed enemy. Leopold, Duke of Austria, between whom, and the king there existed an old grudge, on account of Richard's having caused the duke's banner to be contemptuously thrown into the ditch, over the battlements of a tower, which the Austrian troops had captured during the siege of Acre, now refused, when called upon, to assist in repairing the fortifications of the town, which had been dismantled by Saladin, and were in course of restoration by Richard. "I am neither the son of a mason nor a carpenter," said Leopold, disdainfully. The king who, to set a good example, had worked like the meanest of his soldiers, was filled with indignation at this rebuff; and so far forgot himself as to strike or kick the duke, and to order his followers to turn both the prince and his vassals out of the town, with threatening and most insulting language. The affront was not likely to be forgotten or forgiven; nor was it.

The defences of Ascalon completed, and a chain of forts along the sea-coast having been established between that post and Acre, the Lion-heart proposed to remain in quarters till he could receive fresh supplies of men and money from Europe; but ere he could well despatch his messengers to make known his wants, the distressing intelligence reached him of the plots which had been hatched by King Philippe and his brother John, and of the disturbed state of England. Upon this he forthwith opened a negotiation for peace with Saladin, requiring from that brave prince nothing more than the surrender of Jerusalem and the wood of the true cross, which, from this stipulation, appears not yet to have been given up, notwithstanding the treaty for the surrender of Acre. He proposed, moreover, it is added, a union and consolidation of the Christian and Mohammedan interests, with the establishment in the Holy land of a mixed government of Christians and Moslems, and as the basis of this alliance, he offered to bestow his own sister Joan, the queen dowager of Sicily, upon Saphadin, Saladin's brother, in marriage. This project being entertained by the respective princes, was defeated only through the jealous intolerance of the Catholic priests and the Saracen Imauns. Whether the whole of the story be true or not is doubtful, but it is at least certain that a negotiation was for some time pending, and that during that period the soldiers of the two armies lived in friendly intercourse together, mingling in the tournament and other amusements, and exchanging courtesies with as much freedom and gallantry as though there had never

been hate or hostility between them. Saladin and Richard, indeed, entertained a generous emulation and rivalry throughout the war. Presents frequently passed from one to the other; and when the King of England lay sick at Ascalon, the soldan sent him plums of Damascus, with peaches, pears, and other fruits; and during the heats of summer regularly forwarded to him the inestimable luxury of snow, gathered from the lofty mountains of the interior.

When the negociation was broken off, Richard resolved to make another and last attempt upon Jerusalem. He accordingly put his troops in motion about the end of May 1192, and, in the beginning of June, encamped in the valley of Hebron, where he received fresh messengers from England, bringing tidings of new conspiracies in his dominions, and of armed confederacies already formed there, and threatening to break forth into open rebellion. His heart sickened at the news, and, despairing of the desperate enterprise in which he was embarked, he at once determined to return to his native dominions. After visiting the summit of a mountain which commanded a view of Jerusalem, for the purpose of beholding the city he was not permitted to redeem; he withdrew his forces once more to Acre, and went thence by sea to carry relief to Jaffa, which was sorely pressed by, and partly in the possession of Saladin. The last battle fought by Richard in Palestine took place under the walls of this memorable town. He led on his warriors there in person, dealing death to every one who dared to encounter him. Such was his strength, his ardour, and his success, that whenever he headed a charge against the ordinary troops of the Saracens, the soldiers turned and fled at the sight of him. He was once dismounted in the conflict, but such was the admiration his valour had excited in the breasts of the family of Saladin, that Prince Saphadin sent him, on the instant, two magnificent horses, upon one of which he continued the battle till nightfall. "It was by such deeds," says a modern writer, "that Richard left a traditionary fame behind him that grew and brightened with the passing years, and that his name became a word of fear in the mouths of the Mussulman natives." "This tremendous name," says Gibbon, "was employed by the Syrian mothers to silence their infants; and if a horse suddenly started from the way, his rider was wont to exclaim, 'Dost thou think King Richard is in that bush?'" A truce for three years, three months, three weeks, three days and three hours was immediately afterwards concluded with Saladin, under which all pilgrims from the West were to have full liberty to repair to Jerusalem, without being subject to those obnoxious tolls, taxes and persecutions, which had originally provoked the Crusades; and the priests of the Latin church were allowed to have regular establishments in the Holy city, in Bethlehem and Nazareth for the performance of their religious rites to all who came to pay their devotions in the places which they had been taught to esteem as sacred.

In the month of October, Richard finally set sail from Acre with his

queen, his sister Joan, the Cypriot princess whom he retained in captivity, and the surviving bishops, earls, counts, and knights of England, Normandy, Anjou and Aquitaine who had accompanied him throughout his hapless pilgrimage. A new series of calamities beset him from the moment of his embarkation. First a storm arose and scattered his little fleet, of which some were stranded on the unfriendly coasts of Egypt and Barbary, and their crews made slaves; and others—among them the galley in which were his queen and the ladies of his household—reached Sicily in safety, and proceeded thence to Aquitaine. Richard held on his course towards France; but, when within three days' sail of Marseilles, fearing the enmity of the Count of Toulouse and of the French king, he suddenly turned his prow towards the Adriatic, and after sustaining an attack from some Greek pirates, landed at Zara on the coast of Dalmatia. Here he put on the humble garb of a pilgrim, and dismissing all his attendants, except a single Norman knight and a page who spoke the language of the country—being at that time nearly the same as the language commonly spoken in England—he endeavoured to pass in disguise through Germany, and thence to obtain a passage to England. At Vienna, however, his progress was intercepted by sickness, and his rank and quality were discovered through his ostentatious expenditure. Leopold, duke of Austria, remembering the insults which had been offered to him at Acre and at Ascalon, and anxious to avenge himself, immediately entrapped the noble wanderer, and committed him prisoner to the castle of Diernstein. The Emperor Henry VI. subsequently claimed the custody of the captive, and on guaranteeing to Leopold a fair proportion of the king's ransom, Richard was delivered up, and transferred to one of the imperial fortresses.

King Philippe, on receiving intelligence of the seizure of his foe, was "more rejoiced than if he had received a present of gold or topaz." He wrote at once to the Emperor to congratulate him on his prize, and to enjoin him to guard it with care, "because the world could never be at peace, should such a disturber succeed in making his escape." He even, it is said, offered to pay a sum equal, or superior, to the ransom of Richard, on condition of having the prisoner placed in his keeping. At the same time, he despatched messengers to Prince John of England, with a promise that he would guarantee to him the possession of Normandy, Anjou and Aquitaine, and aid him in obtaining the throne of England, if he would be his faithful ally, and assist him in retaining the Lion-heart in perpetual captivity. John embraced the proposal with alacrity, hastened over to Paris, surrendered to Philippe such territories as he required, did homage for the rest, and agreed, that while his ally should fall upon Normandy, he, with an army of foreign mercenaries, would return and overrun England. One of the clauses of this iniquitous treaty, as signed by John, ran as follows:—"If my brother Richard should offer me peace, I would not accept it without the consent of my ally the king of France; not even in case my ally, for himself, should make peace with my brother."

Nearly a year and a half were occupied in these intrigues, during which Richard continued a close prisoner in Germany; but at last, weary of the importunities of the English—who hated John—of the Normans, who hated Philippe, and of the Pontiff, who felt scandalized that a good soldier of the Cross should have been subjected to such base treatment from Christian princes, the Emperor consented to bring his victim before a Diet, and on the recommendation of the constituent electors, agreed on the receipt of two hundred thousand marks, and on Richard's submitting to fulfil certain specified conditions, to restore him to freedom; and finally, in the month of February, 1194, the royal captive was discharged. Philippe, who was speedily informed of this dreaded event, wrote instantly to John to apprise him of his danger. "Take care of yourself," said the laconic epistle, "the devil is broken loose." The craven-hearted John fled to Normandy, and, being followed by his brother, met him, after massacring some of his friends, at Barfleur, threw himself on his knees, and implored forgiveness. At the intercession of Eleanor, the queen mother, the traitor prince was received once more into favour: but Philippe, neither seeking nor expecting a renewal of the friendship which had formerly existed between him and the English sovereign, prepared with more than his wonted energy to defend the domains he had already acquired, and to extend his sway by arms.

The ensuing war, which was embittered by the personal malice of the principals, turned in favour of Richard. The French were repulsed from every town in Normandy, over which, by force or fraud, they had gained the mastery; and, on one occasion, the military chest of Philippe, containing much rich spoil, together with all the muniments of the crown, which it was customary for the king to carry with him in his journeys, fell into the hands of the English. So signal, indeed, was the success of the Lion-heart, that Philippe was finally compelled to solicit a truce—the terms of which constrained him once more to the limited territories which had devolved on him at the death of his father; but, this being soon broken, another war and another truce followed, which in turn were succeeded by new hostilities and treaties, alternating, with a confused rapidity, during the entire reign of Richard. An incident which preceded the last truce between the kings may be recorded. The English having gained a victory over their antagonists near Gisors, compelled Philippe and his cavaliers to flee for their lives. A bridge over the Epte which the fugitives had to cross, broke down beneath their weight, and the king being precipitated into the water, was nearly drowned. "This day," said Richard, returning from the combat, "I have made the king of France drink deep of the waters of the Epte."

In the meantime, a revolution had long been preparing in the South of France, against the tyranny imposed upon the inhabitants by both the French and the Norman rulers. Philippe however, with more sagacity than his rival, had bent before the storm, and allowed the thunder cloud to pass onward. Richard would yield nothing to entreaty or remonstrance, but

determined on being master by force. Every moment, therefore, that he found himself disengaged from hostilities with the French, he employed in desultory attempts to subjugate the refractory Aquitanians, who, from their advance in civilization, desired more personal and political freedom than he was disposed to accord to them. His last effort was directed against Vidomar, the Viscount of Limoges, who, having found a treasure on his domains, refused to surrender to his suzerain more than half of the value. Richard disdainful to share with an inferior, besieged him in his castle of Chaluz, and after reducing the garrison to the greatest straits for want of provisions, insisted on the unconditional surrender of the fortress—telling the brave men who held it, that, if they longer resisted, he would storm the place, and hang upon the battlements every man found within the walls. Still this threat produced no effect; and the king, at last, in company with the leader of his Brabançon mercenaries, made a survey of the castle, to see on what point the assault might best be made. While thus engaged a youth named Bertrand de Gourdon, having recognised the tyrant, discharged at him an arrow which struck him in the left shoulder. Richard by this was disabled from taking further part in the siege; and, through the unskilfulness of the surgeon, the wound he had received, though slight in itself, proved mortal. Before his death, however, the king had the satisfaction to learn that the fortress had been captured, and that all the garrison, except Gourdon, had been butchered. Bertrand, who was reserved for torture, was brought into the monarch's presence. "Wretch," exclaimed the latter, "what have I done to thee, that thou shouldst have sought my life?" The young man, whose heroism seems to have equalled that of the Lion-heart himself, replied "Thou hast slain with thine own hand, my father and my two brothers, and thou wouldst have hanged myself. I am content now to die—in torture if thou wilt, since I have freed the earth from an oppressor." Richard forgave the youth, and ordered him to be dismissed with a present of a hundred shillings, but Marchadee is said to have retained the prisoner, and after the king's death [6th April 1199], to have caused him to be flayed alive and then hanged.

The death of King Richard was an event to which Philippe had long looked forward with hope, as the only chance of enabling him permanently to extend his dominions. Of Prince John, seeing how little he was beloved, either on the continent or in England, he could have no fear; and Arthur of Britany, the son of Geoffrey, John's elder brother, and, consequently, the legal heir to his uncle's possessions, was too young to give great uneasiness to either of those who sought to despoil the lad of his inheritance. The old intrigues of the French monarch were revived, therefore, the moment the news reached him of his rival's death; and, although the Normans, without hesitation, accepted John as their sovereign, the people of Britany, Poitou, Anjou, Maine, and Touraine, declared for Arthur, and sought protection for themselves and their elected chief at the hands of Philippe, as their acknow-

ledged suzerain. The young prince was forthwith sent to the French court to be educated with Louis, the king's son; and the wily Augustus, without delay, marched an army into the territories of his ward, where he proceeded to dismantle all the towns, and to raze all the fortresses which opened their gates to him. The war, nevertheless, did not then proceed with great vigour, or to any decisive result; as Philippe, about that time, became involved in some disputes with the Pope, which, distracting his attention, disposed him to listen to terms of accommodation with John.

In the year 1193, Philippe, who had become a widower prior to his departure for Palestine, being desirous of allying himself with the Princes of the North, who cherished an hereditary hatred against England, in order to check the power and influence of Richard I., had married Ingeborge, sister of Canute VI., King of Denmark. Some mystery, which it would be vain to attempt to penetrate, hangs over this strange union. All that is certain is, that on the day of the coronation of the young queen, which appears to have been that succeeding her nuptials, Philippe, while looking upon her, suddenly grew pale and trembled, and his attendants could scarcely induce him to remain in the cathedral till the conclusion of the ceremony. About three months afterwards he called a council of ecclesiastics, and required of them the dissolution of his marriage. "The poor young queen," says Henri Martin, "was made to take part in the assembly, without understanding what was its object, or what was said to or of her, and when she was informed by an interpreter, she burst into tears, and exclaimed, 'Male France! Male France! (wicked France) Rome! Rome!' meaning that she appealed from the injustice of her husband and his instruments, to the authority of the sovereign pontiff. She refused to return into Denmark, but withdrawing herself beyond the royal domains, retired to the convent of Cisoing, in Flanders, where she abode, poor and lonely, while the king, her brother, preferred her suit for restitution to the papal court."

As in all such cases, the appeal to Rome made little progress, and Philippe, who had conceived a violent affection for another lady, becoming impatient, braved the menaces of the church by marrying the beautiful Agnes de Mérania, daughter of the Duke of Dalmatia. During the Pontificate of Celestine III., little notice was taken of this infraction of the canonical laws and of the privileges of the holy see; but when Innocent III. assumed the tiara, in 1198, the proceeding was not only severely commented on, but the Pope threatened that, unless the king abandoned his "paramour," and took back to his throne and bed the injured Ingeborge, France should at once be laid under an interdict. Philippe defied the thunders of the Vatican, and the bolt was accordingly launched. The king was excommunicated, and the clergy throughout his dominions were prohibited from performance of any of the rites of the church. Philippe, however, was as resolute as the pontiff was daring; and, without delay, he proceeded to eject from their benefices all such priests as ventured to publish the papal bull, or to yield obedience to

the Supreme Head of the church, and what was deemed more criminal in him, he scrupled not to appropriate their revenues to his own use. He garrisoned the dwellings of the bishops and pastors with soldiers, quartered mercenary troopers upon the monks; and sent and seized Ingeborge in her convent, and committed her a State prisoner to the castle of Etampes. The influence of Innocent, nevertheless, in the end prevailed. The churches were closed, the consecrated bells hung mute in their towers, the altars were stripped of their adornments, the sacred vessels were removed, the tapers put out, the crosses and relics of the saints were strewn before the shrines, and marriage, baptism, and confession were denied to all—save those only who, having taken crusader's vows, were about to depart for the Holy land. Such indeed was the religious desolation of the period, that Philippe, having affianced his own son Louis to the princess Blanche of Castille, was compelled to take the young couple to Normandy, in order to procure there the celebration of their nuptials, which the ecclesiastics of his own realm refused to perform.

This dangerous and desperate state of affairs could not be long endured in an age when the dogmas of the clergy were more revered than the laws of the land or the dictates of reason. In the frequent revolts of his turbulent vassals, the king must have painfully felt that, while under the ban of the church, his subjects were released from their allegiance to him, and that he had none to rely upon but the mercenary bands whom he had drawn around him, and for whose support he was compelled to lay the most oppressive imposts upon all classes of his subjects; and after a struggle of two year's duration—eight months of which the kingdom had been under interdict—he was induced to submit to a compromise, and agree to abide by the decision of a new council, by which the whole question of the divorce and marriage was to be once more examined. The prelates accordingly met at Soissons, [A. D. 1201], and a solemn deliberation of fifteen days ensued; when, suddenly, the king made a voluntary declaration that he would settle the matter without the further interference of strangers; and quitting the assembly, he rode straight to the prison of Ingeborge, took her up behind him on the same steed, and in that manner went to Paris, where he had her proclaimed forthwith as his lawful wife. Agnes de Mérania died a few weeks afterwards, it is said, of a broken heart. The Pope, on this return of his “dear” and “most christian son” to obedience, condescended to legitimize his children by Agnes; and felt it prudent to remain ignorant of the fact, that, although the Danish princess thenceforth took her seat upon the throne as queen, she still continued, as aforetime, husbandless.

A powerful reason for Philippe's sudden concession to the council of Soissons may perhaps be deduced from a view of the position of his neighbour, the King of England, which could scarcely fail to convince him that the moment had arrived to terminate the struggle for mastery in the realm of France, between the houses of Capet and Plantagenet. John, besides having

outraged the feelings of his Breton and other subjects, by the ill-treatment of his nephew Arthur, had latterly drawn upon himself the hatred of his southern vassals by the abduction of Isabelle, daughter of the Count of Angoulême, and wife of Hugh le Brun, Count de la Marche, and the repudiation of his own wife, Avisa of Gloucester. Le Marche and his friends took arms to avenge the insult, and Philippe, having settled his dispute with the Pope, and restored tranquillity to his people, openly took part with the insurgents, and again set forth the rights of young Arthur—then fifteen years old—to the inheritance of Richard *Cœur de Lion*, and in token of the interest which he took in the fortunes of the lad, he knighted him, and married him to the Princess Mary, his (the king's) own daughter. The sincerity of Philippe, however, is not a matter of speculation. In the treaty which was signed by him and Arthur, preparatory to the commencement of hostilities against John, the young Breton was made to agree that his father-in-law should keep all that he pleased of the territories which he had taken, or might thereafter take, in Normandy; and that Arthur should do homage for all the rest of the continental dominions to which he laid claim. The prince was then sent with seven hundred French and Breton knights and their followers, and about five thousand men-at-arms and infantry, to make an incursion into Poitou, while Philippe invaded Normandy. The king speedily captured, almost without the necessity of striking a blow, the important towns of Tillieres, Boutavant, Lyons, Argueil, Mortemar, and Gournay; but Arthur, though he opened the campaign gallantly, by making himself master of Mirabeau, where his grandmother, the infamous Queen Eleanor, was then residing, shortly afterwards fell by treachery into the hands of his uncle John, [1st of August 1202], and was sent prisoner to the castle of Falaise, whence he was transferred to Rouen, where all certain traces of him cease. Concerning the catastrophe of this hideous drama, almost all the accounts which have descended to us differ in the particulars; but both contemporary annalists and tradition concur in attributing to John the cold blooded murder of the youth, either by his own royal hands, or by his immediate direction and in his presence; and the popular hatred which was excited against the tyrant by this foul act, contributed more than anything else to the subsequent humiliation, restlessness, and misery of his hideous life and reign.

The horror and indignation of the Bretons was universal. They looked upon the loss of their chief as an irreparable calamity. They had believed their future independence bound up, as with a spell, in the life of the youth; and, proportioned to the odium with which they regarded Arthur's murderer, was the exaggerated reverence and affection with which they turned to Philippe, his father-in-law and protector, and besought him to avenge the wrong they had suffered. Philippe listened with earnest eagerness to the prayers of the bishops and seigneurs of Britany, affording him, as they did, a legitimate pretext for interfering in a quarrel from which he hoped to

profit; and he cited John, his vassal for the dukedom of Normandy, to appear before the barons of France—who were then first beginning to be called Peers—to answer the charge alleged against him. The English king, as might have been expected, refused to attend this feudal tribunal, upon which the court, which had been regularly convoked by Philippe, pronounced against the contumacious culprit the following sentence:—"That John, duke of Normandy, unmindful of his oath to Philippe, his liege lord, having murdered his elder brother's son, a homager to the crown of France, within the seignory of that realm, is adjudged a traitor; and, as an enemy to the crown of France, has forfeited all the dominions which he held by homage, and has subjected his possessions to entry by force of arms."

John, careless as he was vile, remained meanwhile at Rouen enjoying himself and spending his days and his nights in revelry and debauch with his young and beautiful wife, or concubine, Isabelle of Angoulême, until he was aroused from his lethargic indolence by the news that a general rising had taken place in his Southern states, that Philippe in person was in Poitou, and that the Bretons had already entered Normandy, had attacked and captured the strong fortress of Mont St. Michel, and the town of Avranches, and had sacked and burned all the towns and villages between the last named place and Caen. Even when it was told him that the French king in his advance had taken Andelys, Evreux, Domfront, and Lisieux, and had effected a junction with the Bretons at Caen, he laughed, and continued to make merry with the mimes and prostitutes that formed his voluptuous court, and exclaimed with an air of overweening confidence, "Let them go on—these Frenchmen and rabble Bretons. I will recover in a single day all that they are at so much pains to take from me." He forgot, it seems, that the people of France, Britany, Anjou, Maine, Touraine and the Vexin had all, for the first time, united against the scourge of their land, and were pouring on all sides to Normandy, laying waste and destroying all that had been achieved for that noble province from the days of Rollo the Dane. The Normans themselves made great but unavailing efforts to repel their invaders, but being without a leader, castle after castle, and town after town was lost, till, in less than a year, not a place of strength was left to John in the country except Rouen, Verneuil, and Château-Gaillard. At last the foe appeared at Radepont, in the neighbourhood of Rouen itself, and then John, finding that he must exert himself in some way to avoid being consigned to prison for his crimes, fairly fled in terror—in the month of December 1203—to England, leaving his ancestral domains to their fate.

The citizens of Rouen, animated by hereditary hatred to the French, resolved to hold out to the utmost, and endured all the privations of famine before they ventured to breathe a word about capitulation. At length, however, when their provisions entirely failed, and the inhabitants began to perish of hunger in the streets, they concluded with Philippe a truce for thirty days, at the expiration of which they agreed to surrender, unless, in the meantime,

they should be effectively succoured. In the interval they sent messengers to John, to apprise him of their sufferings and condition, and of the terms which they had made with the besieger; but the envoys, who found the king playing at chess, received for answer, when he had finished his game, "I have no means of relieving you within the time specified; so do the best you can for yourselves." Rouen accordingly surrendered. Verneuil speedily followed the example of the capital, and Château-Gaillard fell about the same time, after sustaining a furious siege with the most heroic devotion and perseverance. Thus John was stripped of every inch of land in Normandy, which had been annexed, two hundred and ninety-two years before, to the English crown, by William the Bastard; and before the end of the year 1204, Britany, Normandy, Anjou, Touraine, Maine, and Poitou, acknowledged the authority of Philippe, and became integral portions of the French kingdom. Aquitaine alone retained any connexion with the English sovereign; and the obedience of that rich and fertile province had long been worse than merely nominal.

John, before confessing to his final defeat and humiliation, endeavoured to stay the career of his conqueror, by means of the spiritual weapons of the see of Rome. He applied to the Pope for his aid and intercession, and, after a lavish expenditure of gold, and many humble entreaties, he induced Innocent to plead in his behalf—in behalf of a felon murderer and recreant coward—with the French king, for restitution of his domains; but Philippe had now achieved both popularity and power, and feeling no longer a necessity for submission to the caprices of the Pontiff, he spurned both the cajollery and the threats of the Mediator, and dismissed his legates with a coldness, which they must have regarded as little better than contempt. Failing in this, John made a last effort to regain his forfeited dominions by arms. Taking advantage of some discontents, which had sprung up against the government of Philippe in Britany, Anjou and Poitou, he landed an army at Rochelle, captured the strong castle of Montauban, and advancing to the Loire, took, and burned Angers, and, after some delay, turned in his course and laid siege to Nantes. Thither Philippe marched against him, and the cowardly John after proposing to settle all differences by negotiation, ran away and sought refuge in England. Normandy, Poitou, Anjou, Maine, Touraine and Britany soon afterwards gave up the contest in behalf of the worthless English monarch, and submitted again to the yoke of King Philippe.

A quarrel, which arose about this time between John and Pope Innocent III., was probably opportune for the French sovereign. Like his rival, the head of the house of Plantagenet had ventured to dispute the pretensions of the Pontiff to appoint his creatures to vacant benefices; and by resistance to the spiritual power, he had drawn upon his kingdom an interdict, and upon himself a sentence of excommunication. John had recourse to the aid of the Emperor Otho in the struggle, and the pope appealed

to Philippe, to assist the church. A formidable fleet and army were even prepared by *Augustus* for the invasion of England; but the timely submission of John, who consented to surrender his crown into the hands of Innocent, and to hold his kingdom thenceforth as a fief of Rome, took from the projected expedition the character of a crusade, and some of the great feudatories of France refused to follow their suzerain to the war, against a penitent Christian. Ferrand, Count of Flanders, who had been bribed to defection by John, was the leader of these refractory nobles; and him accordingly Philippe resolved to punish, before farther pursuing his hostility against the English. He marched with his forces into Flanders, captured and pillaged several of the richest cities of that province, and laid siege at last to Ghent. Here, however, his course was suddenly arrested by the intrepidity of the English mariners and soldiers, who, untainted with the crimes and dastardliness of their king, put to sea from Portsmouth, landed on the Flemish coast, and not only compelled the French to raise the siege of Ghent, but in a short time expelled them from the entire territory of Ferrand, and destroyed the whole of the fleet which had been destined for the invasion of Britain [A. D. 1213].

Elated with this triumph, John now projected to carry the war back into France. For this purpose he formed a powerful league with the Emperor and the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne; among whom it was agreed that the territories of Philippe should be parcelled out the moment they had been conquered. John was to recover all the provinces he had lost, Ferrand was to have Paris and the Isle of France, Renaud of Boulogne was to obtain the district of Vermandois, and the Emperor was to receive the residue of the kingdom. This notable scheme, however, was defeated through want of concert among those with whom it had originated. Instead of attacking the dominions of Philippe upon all points at once, as had been at first intended, the impatient English sovereign, burning for vengeance, led his knights and men-at-arms to Rochelle, before his allies were prepared to assist him; and being met at Poitou by Prince Louis, the son of his foe, he was compelled to give battle at disadvantage, and sustained a defeat sufficient to hold him in check from farther operations. In the meantime, the Emperor, with the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne, and a number of English under the command of the Earl of Salisbury, advanced by rapid marches to Valenciennes, where they hoped to effect a diversion in favour of the Pope's vassal. Philippe advanced against the confederates in person, and, moving from Péronne, on the 23rd of July 1214, came on Sunday the 27th, in sight of the army of which he was in search. He was marching with his advanced guard under the command of the Viscount de Melun, on the Lille road, when, from a rising ground, he suddenly discovered the men at arms of Otho, coming towards him with streaming banners, and well caparisoned steeds, in battle array. He immediately pushed forward to a small bridge called the bridge of Bouvines, and commanded a halt. The two armies

hesitated together, as if doubtful whether an attack ought to be made on the sabbath; but it was at length resolved that the French should cross the



bridge, and form in the plain beyond the stream. The greater portion of the army accordingly had passed the brook, and the king was reposing from the heat and fatigue of the day beneath a tree in the neighbourhood, when a shout arose that the enemy had made an attack upon the corps of the Viscount de Melun, with intent to cut off the rear of the army. The trumpets instantly sounded a charge; the king leaped on horseback, and rushing forward to the foremost line, unfurled the oriflamme, and dashed into the assailing throng, accompanied by the brave William de Barres, the flower of the French chivalry, and the successful combatant of old of Cœur de Lion. Guérin, bishop of Senlis, marshalled the French host, directing the knights with a wand instead of a sword. He galloped along the front charging his countrymen to form in a single extended line, in order that they might not be surrounded by the superior numbers of the enemy; and the squires and valets, who were wont to remain in the rear, were bidden to advance and attack as occasion offered, without regard to distinction of rank between themselves and their antagonists—the latter being the enemies of France and of the church, and their leader an excommunicated person. The Flemish and German cavaliers, indignant at being assailed by men of low degree, are said to have stood still with indignation, till feeling the blows of servitors scarcely inferior to those of nobles, they were compelled to dismiss all thoughts about points of etiquette, and to defend their lives.

Eustace of Magueline was the first to attempt restoring the battle on the side of the Imperialists. He rode forward, crying, "For your ladies' fame—

death to the French!" He was surrounded, dragged from his horse, and held by one of the plebeians, against whom he had so proudly denounced slaughter, while another took off his helmet and plunged his dagger into his throat. Little quarter was given on either side. The French felt that they were fighting for their homes and all that was dear to them; and the Imperialists, having been insulted by the attacks of a rabble, were thirsting for vengeance. The horse of the Duke of Burgundy was killed under him; and the Count de St. Pol was compelled from fatigue to retire from the thick of the conflict. In the centre, where the battle raged hottest, the king of France was exposed to great danger. The *communal* troops of Compiègne, Amiens and Arras observing this, advanced to sustain and protect him. Philippe notwithstanding, was surrounded, dragged from his horse and remained for a moment a prisoner among the foe. The *fleur-de-lis*, the king's standard, was instantly lowered in sign of his danger, when Pierre Tristan, leaping from his horse, killed the man who held his sovereign and rescued him from the *mêlée*. Stephen de Longchamp, a brave English warrior, was next moment killed by the thrust of a lance, which pierced through his eye into his brain; William de Barres then raised his war-cry, and rushing forward, wheeled around and cleared a circle with his sword. The Emperor was now attacked by the French knights. Pierre de Mauvoisin seized his bridle, while Gerard Scropha dealt him a blow on the breast which made him reel in his saddle; but, escaping from a new stroke, through the plunging of his horse, Otho turned and fled. "He has shewn us his back," cried Philippe, "and dare not return to the encounter." De Barres pursued the fugitive; but, advancing too far, was himself surrounded, and would have been made prisoner but for the timely aid of Thomas de St. Vallery. The Imperial standard was now in the hands of the French, and Philippe, in the centre of the army, was perfectly victorious.

Renaud de Boulogne was the last of the confederates who remained to contest the field. His force consisted of a troop of Brabançons, and of the English knights who had been sent to grace the Imperial banners by John. With these he had formed around him a circle of several men deep, from the midst of which he could issue at every favourable opportunity, and into which he could retire for safety on the approach of danger. Of these guards but six are said to have remained alive at the close of the engagement. The count was at last captured by one of the despised French infantry. A soldier advancing upon him unawares, lifted the metal cover of his horse, and plunged a sword into its side. It fell, entangling Renaud's right leg, and ere he could be extricated, he was surrounded and captured. Thirty thousand Imperialists are said to have perished at Bouvines; and five princes, five counts, twenty-five barons, and an immense number of knights and gentlemen remained prisoners in the hands of the French. Among others, the Earl of Salisbury, and the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne swelled the triumph of Philippe at the close of the conflict. The English

Earl was taken by Philip de Dreux, Bishop of Bayeux, who, being unwilling to break the canons of the church, by wielding a sword to shed blood, fought with a mace.

This battle, which has been generally esteemed as one of the most memorable and important that occurred during the middle ages, utterly destroyed the hopes of John and his allies, and gave at once nationality and stability to the realm of France. On the return of the victor to Paris, the whole population of the villages and towns on his road thronged out to meet and welcome him, as their deliverer and father; the bells of the steeples rung merrily as he passed, and at brief intervals along the line his passage was graced by triumphal arches of green boughs and flowers. At Paris, the scholars—the priests and students of the university—gave a fête which lasted for seven days and seven nights, during which mirth, music, and rejoicing were incessant. “Such was the glare of torches after sunset that the streets were as light as at noon.” To commemorate his triumph—which was that of the nation also—and to testify his gratitude, the king founded the abbey of Victoire, under the walls of Senlis, the bishopric of Guérin, the marshal of his host, and to the Communes he abandoned the ransom of many of his most illustrious captives.

The Emperor Otho, whose flight from the field was unimpeded, reached Germany with the wreck of his troops; but it was only to find his throne occupied by another, and to retire to his castle of Hartzberg, in Brunswick, to die in obscurity. John, shortly afterwards, solicited and obtained a truce, on condition of abandoning all the towns and fortresses which he had gained, or which had declared in his favour since his return from England: and on a quarrel with his barons, during the ensuing year [1215], his own kingdom was invaded by Prince Louis, the son of Philippe, at the instigation of the English chiefs, and his capital itself was occupied by a foreign—though it can scarcely be called a hostile—force. The death of John, in October 1216, alone put an end to the humiliation of that debased man and bad sovereign, and saved England from the disgrace of becoming a conquered province of Gaul.

In the meantime two strange episodes in French history, which must not be entirely omitted, had stamped their character upon the generation amid which they sprung, and left their results to posterity;—the fourth crusade against the Paynims, and the crusade against the Albigeois. On quitting Palestine, it will be remembered, Richard had established a truce with Saladin, during whose life it was religiously respected; but the moment the great soldan expired, a struggle for mastery between the Christians and the Mussulmans recommenced; and with the renewal of hostilities new prayers were wafted across the Mediterranean to Rome for aid from the faithful in Europe. In 1198, Innocent, then newly elected to the chair of St. Peter, and desirous of signalling his reign, published a bull, inviting a new crusade against the infidels, who still retained possession of the true cross, the holy sepulchre, and the relics of the martyrs. He went

further than most of his predecessors, indeed, in order to prove his earnestness in the cause which he had espoused, by causing all the gold and silver vessels in which he had been accustomed to be served at table, to be melted and converted into money, and by constraining himself to the use of vessels of wood and of common pottery, so long as the necessities for the crusade should continue. A pious zealot, named Fulk de Neuilly, was charged with preaching the crusade in France, whose reputation for sanctity was such that numerous miracles were everywhere ascribed to him, and crowds from all parts thronged to hear his words. As the chief object of this divine was necessarily to enlist the princes and nobles of the country in the service of the church, he regularly presented himself at all assemblies where a meeting of chevaliers was expected—at jousts and tourneys, at court and church festivals, and at hunting parties, and local assemblages for the administration of justice. His mission had been already crowned with great success, when



a brilliant tournament was holden at Ecry-sur-Aisne, in Champagne. Thither accordingly proceeded Fulk [A. D. 1199] and preached to the

assemblage—gathered for the display of chivalry and gallantry in the eyes of their ladies—with such effect, that all the knights who were present assumed the cross on the spot. Preparations for departure were speedily made, and the crusaders, led on by Baldwin, Count of Flanders, repaired to Venice, the appointed rendezvous, whence the expedition was to embark for Syria. An unexpected obstacle, however, presented itself on their arrival in the territory of the Merchant-princes. The Venetians required a sum of eighty-five thousand marks for the passage of the pilgrims, which was more than the whole body possessed. Baldwin and the other chiefs sold their jewels, their ornaments and trinkets; and those of lower rank converted into money all articles of property they had brought with them, with which they could dispense; but all was insufficient; and fifty thousand marks remained to be raised when the funds of the warriors were exhausted. After some delay, during which the impatience and anger of the strange multitude prompted them more than once to the commission of excesses, the Venetians, who, like true merchants, refused to abate their demands, though anxious to be rid of their guests, proposed that, before proceeding to Palestine, the soldiers of the cross should assist them in the reduction of Zara, a strong city belonging to the Greeks on the coast of Illyria, against which the Lords of the Adriatic had an old quarrel to avenge. The prospect of pillage and of an easy conquest were sufficient inducements to the crusaders to turn from their course; and Dandolo, the Venetian Doge, in order to take advantage of such opportunities for gain, whether in spoliation or territory, as might arise, took the cross among them, and furnished a fleet and provisions for the enterprise, besides a considerable armed force, and the necessary implements for pressing the siege. The armament therefore sailed, not as had been intended, to attack the infidels of the East, but to subjugate the christians or half christianized barbarians of Illyria. It was the first example of a whole body of crusaders being diverted from their object; though Richard I. had led the way in innovation, by his attack and conquest of christian Cyprus, for the sake of the plunder to be obtained in the capture. Pope Innocent was loud and fierce in rebuking his dear children, and in threatening them with the wrath of heaven, for their impious intermeddling with matters directly contravening their vows; but the Venetians merely made open and profane jests touching the denunciation of his holiness; while the French not less firmly, though with more politeness, respectfully declined to obey any injunctions which were contrary to their own will. The siege was urged with vigour, and in a short time Zara surrendered to its assailants.

It was at this period, and while the host was preparing for the voyage to Palestine, that the young prince Alexis Comnenus arrived at Zara to implore the aid of the Frank warriors in behalf of his father, Isaac, Emperor of Constantinople, who had been dethroned by his brother. He made the most liberal promises of reward for the aid of the knights and soldiers—offering no less than two hundred thousand marks of silver, and provisions

for the whole crusade, as a temptation to the expedition. He even proposed to go in person to Egypt, at the head of an army of Greeks, to assist in the recovery of the Holy sepulchre; and, to stifle all religious scruples, he vowed that he would bring back the Greek clergy to due submission to and conformity with the Church of Rome. The crusaders with little hesitation embraced the project; and forthwith set sail for Constantinople. The host which reached that city, according to Villehardouin, the historian of the crusade, amounted to about twenty thousand men; though the Greek writers compute it at the extravagant number of four hundred thousand. It is not, however, by the number, so much as by the nature and habits of the respective parties opposed to each other in the war that the strength of the forces engaged should be estimated. Of the chiefs, Alexis, the Greek usurper, was a prince whose life and policy had been moulded after the effeminate, yet cruel, models furnished by the worst of the Roman rulers during the decline of the empire. While the Bulgarians were ravaging the very frontiers of his dominions, and the crusaders were advancing upon his capital, he remained in luxurious indolence upon the banks of the Propontis, surrounded by concubines and slaves and eunuchs, planning new parterres for the imperial gardens, and levelling the hillocks which imparted too bold an aspect to the scenery amid which he passed his voluptuous hours. His people, degenerate in mind, and feeble, through vicious indulgence, in body, detested, without daring openly to oppose, their monarch; and contented themselves with satirising and burlesquing him in private, and with sending into the streets jays and parrots taught to repeat treasonable words concerning the imbecility of his government. The learning and wit of Constantinople, at the moment when Dandolo and his horde were thundering at the gates of the city, were gravely occupied with the theological question—whether the real body of the Saviour, as presented in the Eucharist, was corruptible or incorruptible; and the council of state had not yet decided on the best means of repulsing the barbarian besiegers from before the walls of the already conquered city of Zara. The men of the West, on the other hand, were hardy and active, fond of war for its own sake, and for the sake of the spoil and the fame which it conferred on the bravest and most enduring. Their leader, the Doge Dandolo, though stricken in years, and somewhat tainted, perhaps, by the mercantile spirit of his nation, was thoroughly imbued with a love of chivalrous enterprise, and, to unsurpassed bravery in the field, united the utmost wisdom and prudence in council. The Greeks themselves, at a glance, saw that resistance was hopeless, against the steel-clad and iron-minded crusaders. The historian, Nicetas, calls the invaders men of bronze, and exterminating angels. Their leaders, he says, were nearly all as tall as their lances, and strong enough to tear an oak from its roots. The siege, it is almost needless to add, ended in the capture of Constantinople, and the aged Isaac Comnenus was immediately taken from his prison, and restored to his unstable throne, A. D. 1203.

The expedition however did not end here. It had been undertaken, not so much for the re-establishment of the old Emperor, as for hire; and now that the work was done, the labourers naturally enough required to be paid, according to the conditions which had been settled at Zara. This was a point of greater difficulty than the conquest of the empire. The treasury was empty, and no means existed for raising on the instant so large a supply as the stipulated sum of two hundred thousand marks. What could be done, however, to redeem his word was readily performed by Prince Alexis. He caused the images of the saints, and the consecrated vessels of the churches to be melted and coined; and compelled the Patriarch of Constantinople to declare from the pulpits of St. Sophia, that, "Pope Innocent III. was the veritable successor of St. Peter, the true shepherd of the faithful, and the supreme Vicar on earth of our Lord Jesus Christ." Still a large debt remained to be discharged by the Imperial family, and for this the Crusaders lingered in their encampment beneath the walls of the capital, where their conduct was continually provoking quarrels and conflicts with the inhabitants, who regarded them as enemies and conquerors, rather than as friends and liberators. One day, some Flemings having raised a brawl, with a number of Jew dealers, within the city, set upon them, and by their brutality aroused the populace to take



part in the fray. A tumult ensued and soon became general, in the midst of which some unknown hand—whether Latin, as the French and Venetians

were indiscriminately called, or Greek, could not be ascertained—set fire to the Jewish quarters; and the flames, spreading through the narrow streets and alleys, soon enveloped and destroyed nearly half the city. The people were exasperated beyond measure; and thenceforward scarcely a day passed without some daring and desperate act of violence or revenge, being perpetrated by one or other of the conflicting races. Alexis, who by his introduction of the foreigners for the rescue of his father, had incurred the odium of all classes, now necessarily became a mere puppet in the hands of his insolent protectors, who treated him without reverence or respect, as one from whom there was little to hope and nothing to fear. The Crusaders indeed even commanded his attendance in his imperial robes, at the orgies which they celebrated from time to time at short intervals in their camp; and on more than one occasion, as Nicetas relates with becoming horror, the Venetians took from his head the diadem which marked his rank, as heir to the throne of the great Constantine, in order to substitute for that sacred covering the coarse woollen cap of one of their tarry sailors.

These disorders, which grew daily worse and worse, at length aroused a cousin of the Emperor, named Murzulphla—a powerful and violent man, whose bushy eyebrows and fierce aspect are said to have had the effect of keeping all his friends and foes in awe of him—to attempt to put an end to the confusion. The means which suggested themselves to him were in accordance with his character, and with the notions of his countrymen. About midnight, while the venerable Emperor slept, Murzulphla entered his chamber, and causing him to be taken up in his bed, had him thrown into the bottom of a deep ditch, where he is believed to have perished. He then, without consulting Alexis, put the city into a state of defence, and assuming the government, openly denounced the Latins as public enemies. The consequences must have been anticipated. The crusaders were attacked wherever they made their appearance in the city, and many were put to death in desultory skirmishes in the streets; till none dared to venture within the walls except in strong bands; nor then unless armed with swords at their sides, and heavy knotted iron maces in their hands, to protect themselves and their comrades from insult and injury.

Both the Latins and the Greeks were now thoroughly instigated to outrage and reprisal, and each prepared for deliberate and regular warfare. The crusaders meanwhile confined themselves to the outer circuit of the walls, and the inhabitants remained in their houses and streets. A sortie was one day ordered by Murzulphla, when a simple Frank cavalier, named Pierre Bacheux, advancing alone in front of his countrymen between the two armies, suddenly couched his lance, and drove with furious determination straight against the leader of the assailing force. The Greeks, believing him, according to the narrative of Nicetas, to be one of those gigantic northern warriors, concerning whose exploits in the Holy Land and elsewhere so many legends were then rife throughout both Europe and Asia, fled on his approach, and

were utterly routed on every side. The gates of Constantinople were closed behind the refugees, and the Latins were thus deprived of the advantages of



their victory ; but so great was their confidence in speedy success, that they immediately held council together for the partition of the Greek empire ; and after settling the provinces among their chiefs, proceeded to apportion the estates, and to fix the homage which was to be paid by the respective subordinates. Murzulphla, convinced from experience that thenceforth his efforts must be vain, and despairing of any advantage from longer protracting the fall of the city, withdrew secretly by night from his palace, and embarking in a small vessel on the Bosphorus, set sail and left the field clear for the conquerors, who next day took unopposed possession of the capital of the Eastern empire.

The pillage obtained by the victorious crusaders was immense. The palaces of the princes and nobles, and the warehouses of the merchants were alike subjected to plunder. The ancient statues of bronze—the last remnants of the city as bequeathed to the old Roman people—were dragged from their pedestals to be melted and coined into money. The churches, already stripped of their plate, were now robbed of their relics, and the altars and shrines were deprived of the ornaments with which they had been decorated by the ostentation or the piety of many succeeding generations. The soldiers of the cross, who had taken arms for the furtherance only of true religion, then drew lots for the provinces of Media, Parthia, and the country which was in the hands of the Saracens ; and games of chance were resorted to for deciding the fate of rich cities and towns, which neither winners nor losers had ever seen, or scarcely before heard of. Boniface de Montferrat,

who in this way acquired the kingdom of Thessalonica, sold the Island of Candia to the Venetians for thirty pounds weight of gold; and other places of nearly equal importance were disposed of in the same reckless manner by those whose wisdom was all exhausted in the field of strife, and whose only virtue—if such it may be called—was the brute courage which enabled them in battle to beat down and overcome all opposition. The Venetians—who were sage calculators and subtle bargainers—obtained by far the larger share of the profits of the enterprise, which they augmented from day to day by purchases from the most needy of the French and Flemings. To Dandolo himself the crusaders offered the imperial crown, but Doge and Knight as he was, he was sufficiently republican in his predilections to reject the honour, and to be content with the title of duke. His power and influence, nevertheless, exceeded that of all the other chiefs engaged in the war; and in a short time nearly half the Eastern empire—including the isles of the Archipelago—through his skill and prudence, were subjected to the citizens of Venice—some of which territories they retained till the dissolution by Napoleon of their own independent government. The Franks meanwhile claimed and kept the city of Constantinople, and on the refusal of Dandolo to accept the sovereignty, they elected Count Baldwin, of Flanders, as Emperor. Its strength, however, had departed from the realm; and the Latins soon learned that it had been more easy to conquer, than it was to retain quiet possession of their prey. The Turks and Bulgarians continually pressed them on different sides, and the native people were their enemies throughout the whole territory. Many years therefore—and these the most unquiet and disastrous—had not elapsed, ere the empire of the Franks was overwhelmed, and the family of Comnenus restored, to exhibit for awhile longer to the world the spectacle of the decay and degeneracy of the once free, proud, and intellectual Greeks—the successors and descendants of the demi-gods of Homer.

France itself at the same time was the scene of a crusade against the heretical Albigeois or Albigenses—who having arisen in the vales of Piedmont, had extended through all the southern provinces of Gaul, refusing to pay tithes, to perform mass, to worship saints or images, to believe in the doctrines of purgatory, and to acknowledge the infallible supremacy of the Pope. For a long time they were left to the unmolested enjoyment of their creed and manners, seeing that few, except the common people, recognised their mission; but when a number of men of high rank and considerable wealth embraced their tenets, the ecclesiastics became alarmed for their temporalities, and the pernicious sect was denounced and consigned to perdition. As this mild persecution, however, had little effect, more stringent measures were resorted to by the church. The scaffold and the blazing pile were fed with numerous victims, and those who were not sufficiently distinguished to be converted into martyrs were deprived of all their property, and driven from their homes to spread along the valleys and over the plains that skirt

the Alps and the Pyrenees, and to fill the villages, towns, and cities that grace the banks of the Garonne and the Rhône with religious dissent and disaffection. It was in vain that prelatical councils and papal bulls formally decried and anathematized them, they still retained their belief, and still succeeded in drawing converts to their worship.

Among others the Counts of Toulouse and Foix, and the Viscount of Béziers, embraced their faith, and afforded protection to their persons. So much of noble and other patronage, indeed, did their patient endurance, and the general piety and purity of their lives, win to them, that Pope Innocent III. became alarmed at their growing numbers and importance, and proposed measures for checking their progress similar to those which had been resorted to for subduing the infidels of Asia. The clergy were required to mark and denounce, not only the heretics themselves, but all persons who should lodge, protect, or hold intercourse with them, either in friendship or in the way of trade or commerce. It was forbidden to extend to them the privileges or courtesies of Christianity while living, or the rites of Christian burial when dead. Kings, princes, and men of authority of all ranks, were enjoined to maltreat them, to seize and confiscate their property, and to raze to the earth their dwellings, and the houses of all such as afforded them countenance or shelter. Two new monastic orders—those of St. Francis and St. Dominic—were instituted for the express purpose of inciting the orthodox to engage in the extermination of the unhappy Albigéois. The Spanish missionary, Dominic, was sent to preach the crusade in France; and to Francis and his brotherhood Italy was assigned as the field of exertion. Amid this persecution, the *Holy Inquisition*, that terrible engine of fiendish malevolence, and of crimes beyond estimate, sprung into existence in Narbonne; where powers having been granted for that purpose by the sovereign pontiff, the Dominicans erected a tribunal, before which all the suspected were brought; and while converts received remission of their sins, with plenary indulgence and various other privileges, the obstinate were branded, imprisoned, tortured, and put to the most excruciating deaths.

Even these measures, however, proved ineffectual for the suppression of the sect and creed of the poor *ensabotés*—so called from their wearing wooden soled sandals, in imitation, it was said, of the Apostles; and Innocent, dreading that both his temporal and spiritual authority would be overthrown by the extension of the principles of the reformers—for such they undoubtedly were—precursors of Wickliffe, of Luther, of Calvin and their followers—who hesitated not to represent Rome itself as a mere den of thieves, and the papacy as nothing less than the scarlet lady spoken of in the Apocalypse, issued his mandate for all princes, nobles and people, who loved the Catholic faith, to take arms against the innovators, and to pursue them to destruction and death. Many, it need hardly be added, were ready to fulfil the wishes of the pope without demur, seeing the rich harvest of plunder which it offered to their hopes, and the indulgence and licentious gratifications, which such

extensive spoliation, in a land abounding with wealth and beauty, presented to their excited imaginations.

The sword of ecclesiastical vengeance was first drawn against Raymond of Toulouse. He was known to be the friend and abettor of the heretics, and it was currently reported of him that he had publicly invested his jester with the priestly robes, and caused him to perform mass before a large congregation of his unbelieving subjects. Moreover, Pierre Castelnau, one of the most active of the papal inquisitors, came to be assassinated in a fray in the territories of Raymond, and the unscrupulous clergy confidently affirmed that the count was privy to the murder. Hence his offences were deemed inexpiable. He was loaded with abuse and infamy; was excommunicated; his subjects were released from their allegiance; and his dominions were offered as a reward to the first knight who should dispossess him. As an additional motive of action to the fanatical, he was held up to odium as a worse than infidel, who, after having made a mockery of the rites of the church, had permitted, if not instigated, the slaughter of her meek and apostolic sons. The minor barons and knights of Burgundy, Normandy and Anjou, and nearly all the petty feudatories of the Isle of France obeyed the welcome call to warfare of the pontiff; and banding themselves together under the designation of "the army of the church," marched southward, for the purpose of restoring the true faith, and at the same time of humbling the power of Raymond and his hated Aquitanians, and of parting among them the rich treasures of the towns and the fertile fields embosomed amid the delicious plains and valleys of Provence. Philippe Auguste took no share in the enterprise, either to check or assist it. He felt that years and a life of activity had done their work on him, and it is probable that remembering his own excommunication in the year 1198, he had no great love for the Pope, and no very strong desire to see his influence promoted: and besides, his quarrel with King John of England was then unsettled, and his presence was required in his capital, to watch the intrigues which had been set on foot by his numerous enemies for the invasion of France.

The force which was actually collected against Count Raymond on this occasion has been variously estimated at from one to five hundred thousand men. It seems probable, however, that at least about two hundred and fifty thousand soldiers had enlisted in the crusade, and now [A. D. 1208] precipitated themselves upon Languedoc, headed by a consecrated banner, and bearing the cross upon their bosoms, as though engaged for the recovery of the Holy land. The troops, it may be remarked, had neither wives, children, nor useless pilgrims to encumber their operations in this, as in earlier expeditions undertaken in the name of religion. The papal legates and the monks of St. Dominic, who accompanied the army, were the only persons who did not bear arms; if indeed the bulls and censures, and other spiritual weapons which these pious enthusiasts carried ever about them, ought not to

be considered as arms—more forcible than any mere carnal implements of warfare wielded by their opponents. Raymond, alarmed at the approach of so formidable a host, promptly offered to submit himself to the judgment of Milon, the pope's chief commissioner, declaring at the same time his personal freedom from heresy, and denying the charges which had been alleged against him by his enemies. The legate, as a pledge of his sincerity, required him to deliver up seven of his Provençal fortresses to the army of the church; and when this demand had been complied with, the count was cited to appear before a council held in the church of St. Gilles at Toulouse, and was compelled to perform the most humiliating penance, in order to satisfy the arrogance, and exhibit the triumph of his persecutors. He appeared at the door of the building barefoot and in his shirt, took an oath of canonical obedience upon the host before Milon, who put a stole round his neck, and, bidding him walk towards the altar, inflicted on him as he went corporal



punishment with a rod; and finally he was reduced to the necessity of taking the cross against his own subjects. The crowd who witnessed this degrading spectacle was such, that Raymond, on his release, was unable to find egress by the door at which he had entered, but was obliged to descend to the vaults of the church, and to pass thence to the streets by a secret passage.

The partisans of the Pope, notwithstanding, gained little from their momentary victory. The whole population of the South was aroused with burning indignation at the treatment of their prince, and the assumption of





Massacre of Beaters.

the haughty prelates, by whom their feelings and independence had been so grossly and wantonly outraged. They rallied at once around Raymond Roger, the Viscount of Béziers, and nephew of Count Raymond, and protesting against the base submission of their chief, vowed to avenge the disgrace which had been inflicted on him and on their country, and to expel the invaders from their soil. The viscount, nothing loth to distinguish himself against the detested races who were in array against him, hastened to assemble the Provençal chivalry, with their men at arms and vassals, to put the towns and cities of the South into a state of defence; and breathed a stern defiance alike to the Pope and his creatures. But the number of the Crusaders was overwhelming. Wherever they appeared their opponents were compelled to give way before them; and when they sat down before the gates of Béziers, the local capital of Raymond Roger, all further resistance seemed hopeless. Still the inhabitants of that town refused to succumb without a contest. When summoned by Arnold, the successor of the Legate Milon, to deliver up the heretics to whom they had afforded refuge, they bravely replied, that they would "sooner be reduced to eat their own flesh;" and even when the city was assaulted, they defended it with such desperate energy and valour, that more of the besiegers than the besieged are reported to have perished in the conflict. The multitude, however, were not long in making themselves masters of the place. The hideous crowd, composed of the vilest sort of people, prompted only by a love of slaughter, and a desire for plunder, were so eager for their prize, that the nobles and knights who had embarked in the crusade had not even time, it is said, to prepare for battle, ere the assault was ended and the sack had commenced. An indiscriminate massacre followed, in which youth and age, old men and infants, matrons and maidens were alike involved; and when a question arose, how the Catholics, of whom it was known that there were many within the walls, might be distinguished from the heretics, in order that they might be spared from destruction, the ferocious Amalric, abbot of Cîteaux, exultingly replied, "Kill them all! the Lord will easily distinguish his own!" He was obeyed to the letter. An immense crowd was thrust into the church of St. Nazaire, from the tower of which the heroic answer of the people had been given to the legate; and there, while the priests and canons, arrayed in their sacred vestments, were preaching words of hope and consolation to their auditors, and "the bells were kept tolling as if all the world were dead," the victors incessantly toiled in their work of death and desolation, till nothing but a heap of corpses remained. When the Crusaders quitted the town, not one human being remained alive within the walls. The number of victims in this atrocious slaughter has been estimated at not less than sixty thousand persons, which, however, is probably exaggerated by nearly or quite half.

Raymond Roger was not at Béziers when the place was stormed, but he had shut himself up in Carcassonne, whither the Crusaders next [A. D. 1209] proceeded in search of him. That town, being built upon the summit of a

steep mountain, in the midst of a wild and barren country, full of rocks and defiles, and without other accessible approaches than two suburban streets, which the inhabitants themselves had delivered to the flames, was enabled to offer a longer and more effectual resistance to the foe than any place which had yet been attacked. In two successive attempts at assault, the besiegers were repulsed with great loss, and when at last the viscount was compelled to listen to terms of surrender, through the failure of his supplies of water and provisions, he resolutely refused every proposal which was made to him, having reference only to his personal security, and declared that "he would rather that his body should be given alive to the flames, than consent to abandon the meanest of his comrades or adherents." Pressed at last, nevertheless, by the famishing multitude, he was obliged to yield. After sending away a great number of men, women, and children, through a subterranean passage, which extended for three leagues beyond the town, he required a safe-conduct, in order that he might plead his cause before the chiefs of the crusade: and this being granted, he sallied forth from his stronghold. As a heretic, however, it was deemed unnecessary to keep faith with the noble warrior. The Pope's envoy at once commanded his arrest for treason; and the Crusaders attacking Carcassonne unawares, made themselves masters of the fortress, hanged about fifty of the inhabitants, burned four hundred more, and imposed tortures of all kinds, in addition to confiscation of property, upon the rest—the clergy presiding at all the executions and atrocities.

Hitherto the crusade had been conducted by the abbot of Cîteaux, but the nobles and knights of the army becoming disgusted with the brutality and carnage, sanctioned and directed by this savage priest, which they had been unable to controul or check, now demanded the appointment of a military chief, whose proceedings might be at least conformable to the usages and courtesies of war. Amalric it appears was unwilling to relinquish his authority, till the withdrawal of a crowd of his supporters compelled him to submit, upon which he successively offered the command of the expedition to the Duke of Burgundy, and the Counts of Nevers and St. Pol, each of whom declined the proffered honour. At last Simon de Montfort, lord of a petty castle and domain in the Isle of France, and Earl of Leicester in England—a man of unbounded ambition, of a fierce and haughty spirit, of unquestionable valour, but of fanatical reverence for the priesthood and their dogmas—accepted the post, and received with it the custody and the inheritance of the Viscount of Béziers. Raymond Roger himself, after a short imprisonment, was poisoned in his dungeon by this crafty and cruel man, "the armed representative of Innocent III," and the people of the south, whether heterodox or orthodox were plundered, persecuted, burned, and assassinated, without regard to age, sex or condition, for no other discoverable purpose than to gratify the saintly hypocrite's lust of blood and of pelf.

The pride and success of De Montfort carried him indeed beyond all bounds.

Not content with the possessions of the Viscount of Béziers, he laid claim to those of Raymond of Toulouse, as having accrued to him by the right of conquest and by the gift of the pope. This immoderate demand was naturally repudiated by the old count, who, backed by the Count of Foix, and the celebrated Don Pedro, King of Aragon, took arms once more to assert his right; and was soon enabled to collect around him such a force as to make De Montfort, in turn, quail before the might of his adversaries. He was now driven from nearly all the places he had taken, and a total revolution seemed about to be completed, when in consequence of some ill-concerted movement of the allies, Simon once more became the victor in a general engagement, which took place in the plain of Theniere, and was enabled to resume an ascendancy, and with it the tone and position of an aggressor.

In the course of this war, an incident occurred which marks at once the character of the Albigeois, and of the age. The castle of Minerva having submitted at discretion, the abbot of Cîteaux exhibited some perplexity as to the treatment of the garrison. "He sincerely desired," says the historian of the persecuted sect, "the death of the enemies of Jesus, but being a monk and a priest, he preferred the conversion of the citizens to their death. Robert de Mauvoisin, a zealot, who happened to be present at the deliberation, being dissatisfied with what appeared to be a wavering in favour of mere humanity, insisted that the crusade had been undertaken not for the purpose of saving, but of extirpating the heretics; and Amalric was finally relieved from all scruple, by the bolder, though not more blood-thirsty asseveration of another soldier, that in all probability not one among the captives would accept the alternative which the monk wished to offer them. This man chanced to be right. The piles being kindled, the Albigeois, disdaining to barter their faith for their lives, precipitated themselves readily into the flames."

The surrender of Minerva was followed by the capture of Ventalon, Montreal, and a number of other places; and Count Raymond felt the necessity of making proposals for peace. The preliminaries were opened by his uncle, Don Pedro, who, in the month of February, 1211, went with the count to Arles, for the purpose of interceding with the legate, who, notwithstanding the cold, gave audience to the royal suitor in the open air, and proposed the following absurd and humiliating conditions for Raymond's signature:—"That the count should lay down his arms, without retaining a single soldier; that he should absolutely and entirely submit to the church, and repair all injuries, and pay all losses sustained by the priesthood during the war; that in all his territories no one should eat more than two kinds of flesh; that he should expel all heretics, their allies and abettors from his dominions; that within a year and a day he should deliver up to the Count de Montfort every person whom that chief should name, in order that they might be punished at discretion; that the Toulousains should not be per-

mitted to wear any jewels, or fine clothes ; or any caps or bonnets of another colour than black ; that all the fortresses of Toulouse should be dismantled ; that no relation or friend of Raymond's should reside in any city, but should be compelled to abide in the open country ; that no new tax should be levied by the count ; but that every head of a family among his subjects should pay four pence yearly to the Pope's legate, and that tiends should be paid throughout the country ; that the legate should not be required to pay toll or any imposition while travelling through the territories of Toulouse ; and that Raymond should take the cross, and, after enrolling himself among the Knights of St. John, should go on a crusade to Palestine, whence he was not to return without permission ; and finally, that unless all these demands were complied with his dominions should be forfeited." Raymond, with becoming spirit, indignantly rejected these proposals ; and, while his uncle, the King of Aragon, hastened to raise an army for his assistance on the other side the Pyrenees, the count made a progress through his own states, for the purpose of rousing his people to arms, by reading to them in all the towns, villages, and public places, the degrading "charter," as it was called, of Arles.

The war was then speedily renewed ; but De Montfort, more vigilant and more skilful than Raymond, and aided moreover by the Archdeacon of Paris, who superintended the construction of a number of formidable engines of war, was enabled to keep the ascendancy he had acquired, and succeeded in reducing almost all the fortified places which still retained allegiance to their native prince. Toulouse itself was finally menaced with assault, and the ruin of the unhappy Albigeois was everywhere confidently predicted. At this period, however, the crusade was destined to acquire a new character. Don Pedro having written to the Pope himself, obtained a reply, in which the invaders were prohibited from pushing their conquest farther, until the decision of the pontiff upon the whole question in dispute should be made known. De Montfort, now, in turn, became the disobedient son of the church. He rejected the arbitration and interference of Rome, and declared that his object was conquest, and not a desire to aggrandise the pontiff, or to maintain his pretensions to universal sovereignty. He deigned, however, to answer the mandate of Innocent ; reproaching him for his too great tenderness, and urging him to embue his mind with greater fervour for the service of the faith. "Arm yourself, seigneur Pope," he said, "with the zeal of Phineas, and assist in more effectually crushing the head already bruised of that tyrant and heretic, Raymond." He did not wait to learn the effect of his missive, but steadily pushed forward, in order, if possible, to complete his operations before the Spanish monarch should be able to bring up new forces against him. In this he was disappointed. Pedro returned with a hundred thousand men, ere the enemy had proceeded farther than Muret, and the town was immediately besieged. De Montfort had no alternative, but instant submission or battle. Notwithstanding the disproportionate force at

his command, he determined to risk an engagement—a resolution in which he is believed to have been strengthened by intercepting a letter, written by Pedro to a noble lady of Toulouse, of whom the king was enamoured, and to whom he had said in his billet, that it was for love of her he had come to



chase the French from the country of her birth. "Who need fear," the fierce old soldier is reported to have exclaimed to the legate, when he had read this epistle, "what the King of Aragon can effect,—after an avowal that he has come to attack the army of God for the love of a harlot?"

The festival of the exaltation of the Holy Cross was the day chosen for the encounter. Montfort spent the eve of battle in confession, in receiving absolution and in prayer. Don Pedro is said to have passed the same hours in pleasure and debauchery; but whether so or not, he was found to be less ready for the engagement at dawn than his adversary. The battle was soon general, and at the first shock, the standard of the king was captured by a band of Frenchmen, who had made a vow to attack none but Don Pedro in person. At the second onslaught the royal soldier, though he had disguised himself by changing his coat armour with one of his attendants, was recognised, and being set upon by the determined fanatics of De Montfort, was overthrown, and left on the field pierced by innumerable wounds. The intelligence of his death soon spread among his army, and created irremediable confusion. Upon disorder rout ensued; and such was the general consternation, and the precipitancy of the flight, that crowds rushed into the swollen waters of the Garonne, and perished there; filling the bed of the river, and raising the stream still higher by their dead bodies. In the

battle and the pursuit, by the sword and the flood, there fell on that day—the 12th of September, 1213—not less than fifteen thousand persons.

The great victory of Muret gave to De Montfort the entire command of the South. Count Raymond having heard of the disastrous end of his kinsman, abandoned Toulouse to its fate, and fleeing with his son, found refuge and concealment among the mountains. The capital then opened its gates to the vanquishers, and two years afterwards the fourth council of Lateran, formally invested the conqueror with the territory which he had won—on condition that he should hold it as a vassal of the church. This put an end to the preaching of the crusade against the Albigeois; but the sect itself, with the doctrines which it had propounded, did not die with the persecution. The embers of vital Christianity indeed continued to burn in a steady, though smouldering fire among the descendants of the remnant of Albi; and revived into a bright glow long afterwards, when the star of the reformation rose to dissolve the mental and moral darkness of Europe and the world.

The subjection of Provence was an acquisition to King Philippe, who in 1216 received the homage of De Montfort for the territories he had conquered; and who, besides receiving the old chief with the utmost distinction at his court, conferred upon him the titles of Duke of Narbonne, Count of Toulouse, and Viscount of Béziers and Carcassonne. Simon, in Paris, was hailed as one of the most devout and holy of all the men who had embraced the cross. The people and the clergy got up processions and fêtes in honour of him and his achievements; and such of the crowd as could so much as touch the hem of the ruthless soldier's mantle esteemed themselves blessed.

The same enthusiasm in favour of the victor of Muret could scarcely be expected to actuate the people of Aquitaine. Their independance, so often threatened aforetime, was now lost, and the hated French had become their masters. Their towns and villages lay depopulated, their fields ravaged and desolate, their fortresses in ruins; their maidens were subjected to insult and violence, and their young men were sold as serfs and villains to strangers. "Alas, poor country!" exclaims a poet who was an eye-witness to the calamities he deplores, "in what a state have I seen you formerly, and now what is your fallen condition." The troubadour minstrels kept alive the feeling of nationality throughout the land; and, when they durst, they kindled among their kinsmen thoughts and burning wishes for vengeance. In the end, so general had become the desire for a combined effort to throw off the yoke of the oppressor, that Count Raymond suddenly reappearing with his son in the midst of his ancient subjects, supported by new succours from Aragon, the whole population rose in revolt, and commenced a war of freedom. The vallies, the forests and the mountains of the South then poured back the exiles and outlaws whom De Montfort had proscribed. Toulouse was foremost in the movement. Its inhabitants rose and expelled their bishop, Foulquet, who had been one of the most active agents in

promoting the crusade against the Albigeois. But the star of Duke Simon once more prevailed ; and Raymond and his adherents were again driven back into obscurity. This was only for a brief space, however. The attempt was renewed in the ensuing year ; when the burghers of Toulouse unexpectedly fell upon the French, and drove them from the city with knives, stones, bludgeons, and whatever other weapons they could raise. The old national cry of "Vive le comte Raymond !" was again heard throughout Languedoc ; and Simon de Montfort found that all his work of subjugation had to be recommenced. He hastened to punish the revolters, and laid siege at once to Toulouse ; but the resistance of the citizens was more determined than he had ever before experienced ; and one day, a general sortie having been made by the inhabitants, in which his brother Guy was struck down and slain, while the old soldier was on his knees beside him, he was himself hit in the forehead by a stone slung by some women from a mangonel erected near the bastion of St. Cernin, and his skull was shattered to pieces—25th of June, 1218.

Amaury de Montfort was instantly proclaimed Count of Toulouse in the room of his father ; but he had little of the indomitable courage or military genius of Simon, and finding that he was unable to make head against the insurgents, he speedily withdrew from the contest, and went to crave aid of King Philippe. Prince Louis, at his request, was then despatched at the head of an army to bring the refractory Provençals to terms ; but hatred of the race of De Montfort was universal ; and the people, dreading torture and death less than slavery, could not be quelled. It may be doubted, indeed, after Louis had learned from observation the atrocities perpetrated by the man on whom his mission was intended to confer a principality, whether he had any strong desire for success in his enterprise. Although sufficiently bigoted and zealous against heretics, he was not naturally cruel ; and while Amaury, on occasions of momentary triumph, was engaged in superintending the massacre of his captives, the Prince was equally busy in rescuing and affording protection to such as he could get into his power. All ranks and classes, people of all ages and of both sexes, armed themselves for defence. The women, in fact, proud of having been the instruments of Simon de Montfort's death, were, if possible, more enthusiastic than the men, and laboured incessantly on the ramparts, with their children at their backs, supplying stones, and hurling implements of destruction or annoyance at the enemy. The vaunt of Amaury that he would not permit one human being—male or female, old or young—to remain alive in Toulouse, nor one stone to surmount another within its walls, not only proved idle but contemptible ; for it was soon perceptible that his own forces, and not the Aquitanians, were the foiled and beaten parties. His ranks were daily thinned by the frequent and determined sorties of the citizens, and by the diseases of the hot climate. Division soon crept into his baffled councils ; and as their term of feudal service respectively expired, the French nobles and knights withdrew in

disgust from the unprofitable and unpromising struggle, till Prince Louis, seeing the probability of being left alone to prosecute the war, burned his engines and artillery, and commenced a hasty retreat with the remnant of his followers, having lost a large number of lives and a good share of reputation in the fruitless siege.

Thus defeated at Toulouse, Amaury was successively deprived of all the places his father had held, except only Carcassone, Agde, and Narbonne, and being pressed even here, he as a final resource, and as a means of saving at least a wreck of the honour and greatness of his family, made an offer to cede the whole territory, which he claimed as his inheritance, to Philippe Auguste. The old king however was not to be longer dazzled by illusory projects of ambition. His years and infirmities required repose; and, notwithstanding the solicitations even of the Pope in behalf of De Montfort, the monarch declined the honour of nominally reigning over a country in which his name was hated, and his mandates would be certain to be treated with scorn and contumely. Amaury therefore, sunk, thenceforward into the condition from which his father had emerged—of a petty noble, with a long train of nominal dignities, but with neither substantial power nor wealth.

In the meantime Philippe remained quiet in his capital, steadily prosecuting the great design which seems to have been the chief object of his whole life and administration—the consolidation of his power over the realm of France, and the establishment of such institutions as might secure that power to his posterity. Besides the corps of guards which he had formed for the protection of his own person, he adopted other wise and prudent measures for diminishing the power of the feudal aristocracy, by exalting that of the people, and making them as much as possible dependent upon the crown. He continued like his predecessor to grant numerous charters of municipality to the towns; and throughout the kingdom he appointed regal courts of justice, in which causes were decided, not according to the will of an individual, but according to known and established laws. France was divided into bailiwicks, in each of which the bailiffs were required to nominate four prudent men, of approved character, by whom the judicial affairs of the district were to be regulated. The bailiffs themselves once in every month were required to hold an assize or court of justice, in which their judgments and transactions were to be duly recorded. Appeals lay to the king or his commissary in person—a court for hearing which was holden every four months, when all the bailiffs in the kingdom were required to attend, to report their several proceedings, and to deliver in their general observations on the state of the nation. Any malversation by a bailiff was required to be reported to the king, to whom appertained the punishment of the delinquents. The taxes were ordered to be paid three times a year at Paris—at the terms of Candlemas, Whitsuntide and the feast of St. Remi (Michaelmas), to the six bailiffs of the capital and the deputy marshal



Notre Dame de Paris.

or Prévôt—an officer whose duties answered to those of the ancient Count of Paris, a title which Hugh Capet had annexed to or merged in the crown. To the king's clerk was entrusted the receipt of the revenue, and the accurate accounting on record for the disposal thereof—the money till wanted being lodged in chests, of which each bailiff kept a key. Upon the feuds of the barons a salutary check was placed by an ordonnance, which made it criminal to take vengeance for an insult or injury till forty days after the commission of the offence, and then only with the approbation of the bishop of the diocese. The loss of the national records at Fréteval was supplied, as best might be, by such copies as were extant; and, it may be surmised, by a few forgeries, tending to assist the king in his attempt to reform the system of administration, and to render more certain the operation of the laws. The Court of Peers, among other tribunals, was instituted for deciding upon all important matters relating to the duties and homage of the great feudatories, over which the king retained a controlling power, but left the labour of deliberation and the privilege of recommendation and council to his faithful vassals. The state of the capital was not neglected. For the accommodation of the merchants and traders resorting to that continually increasing city, the king founded two large halls, to lodge their goods and serve as market places—a boon which will be best appreciated by those who remember, that, independently of damage from exposure to the weather, the wares of dealers were continually subjected to plunder from the lawless, and that against these depredations no adequate provision had yet been invented. Philippe enriched the school—afterwards the university, built the tower of the Louvre, and completed the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame de Paris, which had been commenced during the reign of Louis the seventh. Science, the arts and literature, were encouraged and promoted. Trade was cherished, and the *middle class* of society may almost be said to have been called by this sovereign into being. In order further to facilitate commercial transactions, the merchants had the right granted them of adjudicating on all matters of minor importance, of regulating weights and measures, managing the navigation of the Seine, and settling all matters within the terms and meaning of their charter of incorporation. And above all, from being the head of a mere feudal aristocracy, Philippe Auguste had become the head of a genuine monarchy, of which, if the constitution was still incomplete, all the foundations had been firmly laid, and much of the superstructure had been reared. The king died of a disease under which he had for some time languished, on the 14th of July 1223. By his will he bequeathed to his executors for various purposes an amount of treasure, which, considering his munificence during life, scarcely appears credible. Fifty thousand livres (a sum estimated according to present value at one million two hundred thousand pounds sterling) were directed to be paid as compensation to whomsoever might produce tangible charges of injustice against the king. The Templars and Hospitallers, the Abbey of St. Denis,

and that of St. Victor, which he had founded near Charenton, were especially remembered; while the poor of Paris were not forgotten. Amaury de Montfort even came in for the share of the old man's bounty;—twenty thousand livres being bequeathed to him, to assist in extirpating the heretical Albigeois. To Queen Ingeborge, and Philippe *Hurepel*, or *the Rude*, the son of the once beloved Agnes de Méranie, ten thousand livres each were given; and the surplus, which was purposely left blank in the will, was conferred upon the prince who succeeded to the throne.

Louis VIII., surnamed by his flatterers, notwithstanding some equivocal demonstrations of weakness which have been recorded, after the English hero, "Cœur de Lion" had reached the mature age of thirty-six, when he attained the sceptre of his ample dominions. On account of its short duration, says an acute writer, "this reign presents few incidents worthy of special notice, and may indeed be considered as little more than a supplement to the long and glorious rule of his father." Though without any peculiar distinctive marks, notwithstanding, it was not destitute of events. The moment after his coronation he entered upon a quarrel with Henry III. of England—who had refused to attend that ceremonial—concerning the fiefs which Philippe II. had conquered from the imbecile King John. Instead of restoring these, as was demanded of him, Louis prepared, on receiving the message of the English sovereign, to wrest from his rival all that still remained to him of his continental dominions, and for that purpose speedily marched at the head of a large army, into Poitou, which in a brief space he overran, and before the Autumn of 1224, the whole Country North of the Garonne, was annexed to the possessions of the French crown. A few months more, it is probable, would have seen Henry stripped of every foot of land which his ancestors had held out of Britain; but that, just at the moment of success, the attention of Louis was diverted to other objects; and he therefore, on the mediation of the Pope, and the receipt of a large sum of money, consented to grant a truce for three years, during which he expired.

The matter which called Louis away from Guienne, was the renewal by Amaury de Montfort of his offer to cede to the king, all his so called dominions in the South, in exchange for the post of High Constable of France, whenever the next vacancy should occur. Young and ardent, full of ambition and self-confidence, Louis, unlike his father, at once closed with the proposal of the titular Count of Toulouse, and having collected an army of upwards of fifty thousand men at arms, besides infantry; he forthwith marched towards Aquitaine, to expel Raymond VII., (the old Count had died in the year 1222) from his inheritance, under pretence of suppressing more effectually the detestable heresy of the Albigeois. For this expedition he had easily obtained the sanction of the Church, which notwithstanding the entire submission of Raymond, and his solemn disavowal of the creed of the Albigenes, had never been reconciled to a prince who had once dared to brave her anathemas, and had successfully eluded her vengeance. Pope Honorius indeed was so eager

to punish the disobedient Provençal, that besides excommunicating him, preparatory to the attack of Louis upon his territories, he granted to the invader, towards defraying the expense of the sacred enterprise, the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues throughout France, for the long period of five years, or during the continuance of the war.

Avignon, a city considered to belong to the kingdom of Arles, a fief of the German Emperor, but virtually an independent state governed by its own magistrates, and forming and breaking its alliances at pleasure, was the first important place beyond his own frontiers, which lay in the French king's line of march. The citizens had long maintained a friendly intercourse with the people of Toulouse, and were suspected of being tainted with the heresies of the Albigeois. Louis imperiously demanded a passage through the territory of this wealthy municipality; and the authorities, hopeless of offering effectual resistance to the approaching force, hastened to present themselves before the king, and to offer not only a free passage by their bridge across the Rhône, but a large stock of provisions and other supplies, on condition that the advancing army would forbear from traversing their peaceful streets. The insolent monarch repelled this reasonable proposal with disdain, and informed the magistrates of his determination to pass, with drawn sword, followed by his soldiers in all military pomp, and accompanied by the legate of the Pope, through the very heart of their city. The answer, as might have been expected, aroused all the ire and indignation of the populace of Avignon, who immediately closed their gates, and prepared for an energetic defence. The contest which ensued was an unequal one; but the burghers acquitted themselves well and manfully. They returned "unsparingly and in kind every weapon which the perverse skill of the times supplied for mutual destruction. They invented engines which counteracted the engines of their enemies; and they inflicted many deadly wounds upon the French." So long was the defence protracted, and so little either of honour or profit did the French nobles and knights acquire in the struggle, that all became discontented with the expedition; and Thibaut, Count of Champagne, urging that his suzerain had no claim upon his aid beyond the forty days to which feudal service in the field was limited, abandoned the camp and returned to his own estates. Louis, however, though his troops fell thick around him by disease, fatigue, scantiness of provisions and the sword, persevered; and after numerous assaults, a delay of three months, and the loss of about twenty thousand men, Avignon was obliged to open its gates by capitulation. The conquest, however, was barren. The season was too far advanced to permit the invaders to proceed against Toulouse; and the king, unable longer to endure the atmosphere, and the epidemics which it produced among his northern warriors, hastened to retreat to his own dominions, to await the spring, and procure reinforcements before opening a new campaign. His health and strength, however, had been already exhausted, and on reaching the mountains of Auvergne he sank beneath the fever which had seized him, and

expired at Montpensier on the 29th of October, 1226. His death, by some, has been attributed to poison, administered by Thibaut of Champagne, who, being a devoted Troubadour, had in his lays expressed the most ardent passion for Queen Blanche, who is reported to have been by no means insensible to the attentions of her illustrious admirer. There is little doubt, however, that this charge is altogether a calumny, having its origin in after circumstances, and receiving a minute degree of colour from the fervent outpourings of poetical adoration, which it was the fantastic custom of the age to approve without considering it derogatory to the reputation of the lady addressed, notwithstanding her being married, and there being, between her and her *servente*, the greatest disparity of age and rank.

By his will, dated in June, 1225, the deceased king had settled the crown upon his eldest son Louis. To Robert, his second child, he had given the county of Artois; to Alphonso, Anjou and Maine; and to Charles, Poitou and Auvergne. John, his fifth son, had been destined for the church, and was therefore left landless. Queen Blanche, a strong and masculine minded woman, was invested with the regency, and entrusted with the education of the young king, St. Louis,—who had the misfortune to ascend the throne at the age of twelve years.

The very first days of the new reign were disturbed by dissensions, jealousies, and conspiracies. When invited to attend the coronation of Louis IX., at Rheims, a number of the turbulent barons and feudatories refused to do so, or to renew their homage, unless the prisoners who had been taken at Bouvines, and still lingered in captivity, should be first released, and the ancient customs of the realm, which, during the last two reigns, had been disregarded and set at nought, should be re-established. Some, it is said, demanded restitution of all the estates, which, from the accession of Philippe II., had been confiscated; and others openly proclaimed their disgust at being required to yield obedience to a woman and a Spaniard. Blanche, supported by her constitutional Castilian pride, proceeded to the inauguration of her son in the absence of the disaffected; and, the moment the ceremonial was over, she hastened to raise an army for the purpose of crushing the league which was too manifestly forming against her authority, if not her life. By this unexpected promptitude, she compelled her enemies to declare themselves before their purpose was ripe for action; and she then became aware that among her adversaries were numbered Philippe Hurepel, Count of Boulogne, her husband's brother, who claimed for himself the regency as of right; Pierre de Dreux—whose hostility to the church had won for him the soubriquet of *Maulerc*—or *Mauvais-clerc*; Savary of Mauleon; Hugues de Lusignan, Count de la Marche, Thibaut of Champagne, who, because of his imprudent verses concerning his love for the Queen Mother, had been prohibited from attending the young king's coronation, while his countess—for he was married—had been rudely repulsed from the very doors of the cathedral of Rheims, where she had presented herself to bear the sword of

state in right, and as the deputy of her husband. Enguerrand de Courcy, whose pretensions are stated to have fallen nothing short of the crown itself, was also among the malcontents ; together with Hugues de St. Paul, Simon de Ponthieu, and nearly all the nobles of Poitou, who regretted the busy and profitable days, when the English domination almost constantly afforded them pretexts for marauding excursions and warfare. Aquitaine, Normandy, Guienne—all the provinces which had been subjugated to the new and more haughty royalty of Philippe Auguste, thought the moment favourable for reasserting the independence of which they had been deprived ; and hoped once more to reduce the power of the king to the same narrow limits as when he was merely the seigneur of Laon, president of the *Cour plénière*, and general of the feudal armies, confederated for the defence and protection of the realm. All the labour of Philippe seemed about to be destroyed at a blow ; when Blanche, calling her charms,—and she is reported to have been exceedingly beautiful—to her aid, addressed herself to her revolted lover, Thibaut, and by holding out the prospect of a love intrigue—real or feigned—sought to defeat the designs of her numerous and powerful adversaries. “A woman of address and beauty,” says Sir Walter Scott, “knows well how to recover the affections of an offended admirer ; and, if he be of a romantic and poetical temperament, he is still more easily recalled to his allegiance. It cost the queen but an artful hint that she would be pleased to see Thibaut at court ; and the faithful lover was at her feet and at her command.” Instead of joining the rebels, as he had promised in Poitou, he hastened to make his submission to the regent at Tours, and by his disaffection so disconcerted the plans of the allies, that most of them, in turn, fearing treachery in each other, hastened after their comrade, and added their oaths of fidelity to his.

The reconciliation thus effected, it need hardly be said, was insincere and hollow. Nothing that had been complained of was altered or redressed, and the feelings of discontent which had been engendered among the rebellious chiefs, still smouldered on beneath the slender garb of loyalty, which had been assumed for momentary safety. A short time only had elapsed ere the Count of Boulogne, having sounded his friends, formed a new conspiracy, the chief object of which was to obtain possession of the young king's person. Accordingly, they formed one day an ambush at Etampes, when it was known that Louis was going from Paris to Orleans ; and had it not again been for the love-lorn fears of Thibaut, the project would most likely have succeeded. Fearing the displeasure of his royal mistress, however, the poet hastened to inform her son of his danger, in time for him to take refuge in the castle of Montlhéry, and then proceeding to Paris, he acquainted the queen with all that had been done and meditated. Blanche, summoning the citizens, marched at once to the rescue. Such a crowd accompanied the fair Castilian on this occasion, that “from the capital to Montlhéry the roads were full of people armed and without arms, marching in close file side by side, crying

with a loud voice upon the Lord to endow the king with a long life and prosperity." With this escort the king was brought back in triumph, without a single adversary daring to shew his face.

But though still baffled, the conspirators were not sufficiently disheartened to induce them to relinquish their design. The Duke of Britany, in the ensuing year, having openly revolted, all the barons and feudatories were summoned to aid the crown, according to their fealty, to reduce the refractory vassal to submission. Each, as had been agreed among them, attended the rendezvous; but none brought with him more than two men at arms—a force totally inadequate, supposing it had been well affected, and disposed to act in behalf of the sovereign—to cope with the army which was arrayed against it. The devoted troubadour a third time proved the guardian of "the lady of his affections." While the queen was deliberating upon the course which it would be necessary for her to pursue, to ensure her own safety and that of her son, who was present, Thibaut suddenly made his



appearance in the camp with three hundred cavaliers and their attendants, and so overawed the whole confederacy, that the Breton prince laid down his arms and sued for peace and pardon, and the rest of the conspirators were constrained once more to renew their worthless vows of obedience and fidelity. Thibaut now became the object of attack and fury to those whom his fantastic amour had so often exposed to danger and defeat. In a short time they mustered in strength, and marching to Champagne, carried fire and sword

through that fertile province, and vowed not to rest till they had expelled the faithless count from his patrimony, and bestowed it upon Alice, Queen of Cyprus, the heiress of his elder brother. Fortunately for Thibaut, the Communes, of whom he was the friend and protector against the petty and tyrannical castellans, were entirely devoted to his interests and wishes; and these made a brave and determined stand against the invaders. The bourgeois of Troyes, commanded by the father of Joinville, opposed so vigorous an opposition to the advance of the foe, that, ere they could complete their work of desolation, sufficient time elapsed for the regent to send her son in person to the succour of her true and loyal knight. The confederates were defeated; but Blanche, as the price of her aid to her lover, compelled him to perform what she conceived to be an act of justice to his niece, the Queen of Cyprus, by paying in compensation of the claims of that lady the sum of forty thousand livres in ready cash, and to settle upon her as a pension two thousand livres per annum. The gallant count, it is added, being unable to raise so much money on the instant—his coffers having been emptied by the expenses of feasts and tournaments—the royal treasure was opened to him; but not until he had consented to assign to the king the valuable territories of Blois, Chartres, Sancerre, and Châteaudun [A. D. 1229.] Thibaut is said to have murmured a little when required to yield so large a portion of his domains; but when the beautiful queen, with an angry look, reproached him for his disobedience, he shrugged his shoulders, heaved a sigh, and exclaimed, “By my faith, madam, my heart, body, life, and land are all yours, and at your absolute disposal.”

This victory, which, it was hoped, would restore peace, brought only a respite to the Queen-mother and her son. The western provinces of France, as discontented as ever, incessantly intrigued for the purpose of obtaining a release from the yoke which they detested. Henry III., of England, constantly invoked for aid, at last determined on conducting an army to the long threatened invasion of the continent, and disembarked with a numerous and well organized host, at the festival of Easter, 1230, at St. Malo. The court of Peers, summoned for that purpose by Blanche, immediately attainted Pierre Mauclerc, of Britany, who had sworn fidelity to the foreigner, and a powerful army was gathered for the defence of the realm. So indisposed, however, were the French barons to support the regent in her exertions, that had Henry possessed ordinary talent or diligence, there is little doubt that he would soon have been enabled to recover all the estates which his father had lost; but he was indolent and voluptuous, and wasted the time and money that would have sufficed for the expedition in expensive pleasures and follies; and after exhibiting his imbecility for about three months, he hastened to recross the channel, covered with disgrace, and minus the whole amount of treasure which had been wrung from his English subjects for the purposes of his vain-glorious military parade. His unhappy ally, the Duke of Britany, was soon reduced to submission, when the hard condition imposed on him

was, that he should appear at the foot of the throne of young Louis, with a rope round his neck, and crave pardon for his manifold revolts and treasons.

While this mockery of a war was proceeding, another attempt was made by the nobles whom he had so often deceived, to wrest from Count Thibaut his family possessions. They poured large predatory bands into Champagne, and ravaged the country in all directions; till wearied and desperate, the poet-warrior was glad to sue for peace and forgiveness, and finally to consent to take the cross, and lead a specified number of retainers to the Holy Land to assist in the recovery of Jerusalem. Thibaut thenceforward seems to have abandoned his amours and intrigues; and sometime afterwards, on the death of Sancho VII., without issue, he ascended the throne of Navarre, in the right of his mother Blanche, the deceased king's sister. "His extravagant devotion to beauty and poetry," it has been said, "did not prevent his being held in those days a sagacious as well as accomplished sovereign."

About this time [A. D. 1231.] a termination was put to a quarrel which, though originating in a tavern, had engaged the attention of the learned of Europe for two years. During the carnival of 1229, on a Sunday evening, a number of the students of Paris, distinguished as scholars of Picardy, having



quarrelled with the vintner, had sought to redress their grievance by violence, when the inhabitants of the faubourg St. Marceau set upon them,

and drove them with staves and stones back into the capital. Next day the students armed themselves, and with a large concourse of their friends and companions returned to the charge upon the tavern-keeper and his abettors. They then destroyed his bottles and drinking vessels, and threw his wine upon the floor; after which they sallied into the streets and furiously attacked all they met—beating and injuring a multitude of innocent men and women. Complaint was immediately made of this outrage to the queen regent, who at once dispatched the *Prévôt's* men (*routiers*) to the spot to secure the offenders; but these persons, instead of attacking the rioters, fell upon all who wore the garb of students that were found without the city walls—several of whom were killed in the fray that ensued. Among those who were thus slain were two young men of noble birth—a Fleming and a Norman. The whole university raised an outcry against the insult and wrong; and, unable to obtain redress from the queen's officers, they resolved to abandon the city, "that nurse of philosophy and wisdom," and to take the light of their learning to more favourable scenes. The schools of Angers, Toulouse, Rheims, Orléans, Spain, Italy and England, were readily opened to both masters and pupils, who were everywhere received with a joyful welcome, as the victims of injustice and persecution, instead of being regarded in their true light of refractory and rebellious subjects. The dispersion, besides casting a stigma on Paris, was looked upon as a scandal to Christendom. Pope Gregory IX., without much enquiry, it may be presumed, into the merits of the case, warmly espoused the cause of the scholars. He wrote to the bishop, to Queen Blanche, and to the young king, urging earnestly that reparation should be made to the university, in order that Paris might no longer be deprived of its brightest ornament and hope; and at last, after much intercession, the burghers—over whom the clergy were always sure to be finally triumphant—were compelled to submit and make satisfaction, and the students were brought back to their abode, with the pride and presumption of conquerors.

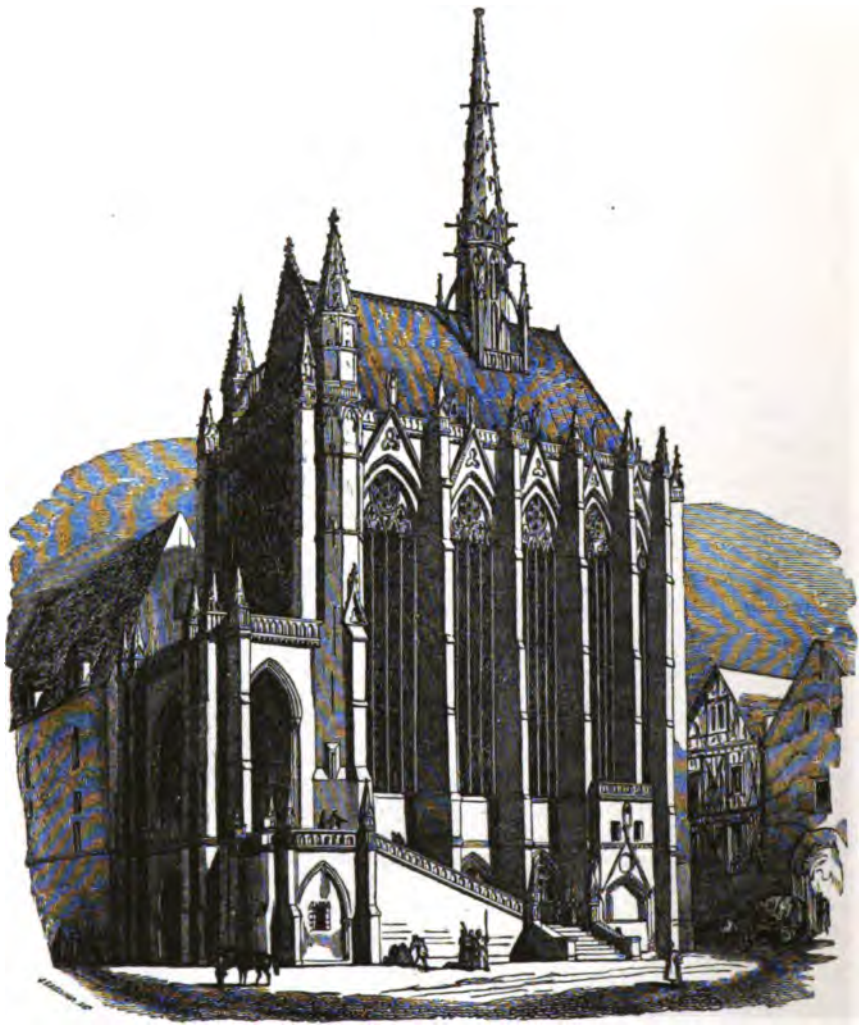
A similar quarrel not long afterwards broke out at Orléans. Some of the young clerks, taking advantage of an occasion of rejoicing among the citizens, created a tumult, which, commencing in a mere brawl, ended in a massacre. Many of the scholars—and of the townsmen also—were stabbed in the streets, others were thrown into the Loire and drowned, and a great number were compelled to flee for concealment and security into the neighbouring vineyards, and the caverns on the bank of the river. Among those who chanced to be slain in this encounter, were a nephew of the Count of Champagne, a nephew of the Count de la Marche, two near relatives of Pierre Mauclerc of Britany, and young Archambaud de Bourbon. The bishop on hearing of the occurrence, immediately quitted the city, and launched against the bold burghers his prelatical interdict; upon which the friends of the slaughtered youths hastened to the devoted place, to avenge by force of arms the blood which had been shed. The feud was only quelled by the interference, with all the might of the royal

authority, of Queen Blanche and her son ; and then only on the humiliation of the citizens.

Fortunately for the regent, and probably for the preservation of the kingly power also, the term of Louis's long minority was now near its close. In 1234 he attained his twentieth year, and having expressed an inclination to marry, his mother sought for him a bride among the Provençal race, which she hoped by that means to conciliate in such wise as to gain a footing in the south, and thus secure to the crown the provinces, for the acquisition of which, so much blood and treasure had already been fruitlessly lavished. The consort of her choice was Margaret, eldest daughter of Raymond Bérenger, Count of Provence : but under the pretext of the young queen's tender age—she was little more than thirteen—Blanche established such regulations for the intercourse of the young couple, as effectually prevented Margaret from obtaining much conjugal influence over her husband. During the day time, according to Joinville, who has minutely chronicled the events of this reign, the queen, who was treated rather as a little child than a bride, was carefully kept apart from her spouse. Louis was forbidden to remain in her room without witnesses ; and even when on a journey he was not permitted to occupy the same apartment with her. During a brief residence at Pontoise, the king, discovering a private staircase, found means, it is added, of introducing himself to his wife, but such was his fear of detection, that he instructed the servants of the household to whip the dogs about the adjoining apartment, should his mother approach, in order that he might have time to elude her observation and reproaches. One day, however, his precaution having been neglected, Blanche discovered her son and daughter alone together, the former concealed behind the chair of the latter. She took the king by the hand, and leading him from the chamber said with a frown ; “Go hence—here I alone am queen.” Margaret, who was ill at the time, burst into tears, and replied, “You will not let me speak with my husband, whether living or dying.”

The attainment of twenty-one not long afterwards, released Louis from this domestic thralldom, and then a more masculine and determined character than could well have been expected in him, began to be gradually developed. With much mildness and forbearance, he was found to unite firmness of purpose, indomitable courage and perseverance, and great vigour and wisdom. His arbitration was sought in 1240, to settle the dispute which had arisen between the Pope and the Emperor Frederic II ; and when the Pontiff, on a new quarrel with his antagonist, offered to Robert of Artois, the king's brother, the imperial crown, he had the good sense and moderation to decline a gift, which, instead of conferring dominion, would merely have entailed on his family the miseries of a fierce and bitter war.

He was not, it may here be remarked, equally sage in all things. When Baldwin II. was expelled by the Greeks from the Latin throne of Constan-



The Holy Chapel built by Saint Louis.



Queen Blanche excludes Louis IX. from the chamber of his wife.

tinople, Louis offered to pay thirteen thousand one hundred and thirty-four *perperi*—an eastern coin, of which each *pira* is estimated as equivalent to about twelve modern francs—to redeem from the hands of the Venetian and Genoese merchants, to whom the fugitive emperor had pledged it, the veritable Crown of Thorns, the most precious relique which had been in possession of the Greeks. This large sum, together with ten thousand livres to Baldwin himself, was accordingly disbursed, and, although the abbey of St. Denis already boasted of another true crown, a special mission was despatched to Venice to bring home the sacred treasure. The king went out in person to meet the bearers of the relique on their return, barefooted and clad as a humble pilgrim; and bore it on his own shoulders, assisted only by his brother Robert, first to Nôtre Dame, and afterwards to the chapel of St. Nicholas without the precincts of the palace. The latter edifice having been greatly beautified and enriched by the pious munificence of Louis, became, at a later period, the depository of many other sanctified remains; and from its profusion of such wealth, and the reverential awe connected with it, the sanctuary itself acquired the name of *La Sainte Chapelle*.

The next adventure of the future saint occurred in 1241, when he went to install his brother Alphonso in the fief of Poitou. This rich apannage—part of the conquests of Philippe Auguste, from King John of England—had been previously bestowed by Henry III. upon his brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and the Poitevins, preferring the English alliance to that of France, were generally disposed to favour any movement that would free them from the badge of subjection. The nobles and chevaliers of the country mustered in force at the inauguration of their new prince, and took the oath of homage without scruple; but a few days afterwards, when the king and his attendants were about to depart from Poitiers, Hugues de Lusignan, Count de la Marche, suddenly appeared before them with a large company of men at arms and archers, and after renouncing fealty, declared war against Alphonso, in terms of contemptuous disdain and defiance. Others followed the example of this proud and factious lord, and Louis was compelled to hasten to Paris, to collect forces to meet, and if possible dispel, the storm which it was evident was gathering around him. This was speedily done; for the king was at once rich and active; and, returning to the west, he soon bore down all resistance from Hugues and his friends. This was not accomplished, however, without a desperate struggle on the part of the revolted Count and his adherents; who, having received a promise of assistance from Henry III., maintained their ground to the last—burning and destroying all the means of subsistence for an army around them, rooting up the vineyards, and filling up or poisoning the wells. One by one, however, the various fortresses of the district fell into the hands of Louis *Cœur de Lion*. Frontenay, till then deemed impregnable, was carried by assault, and the son of de la Marche, together with forty-one knights and all the garrison, were made prisoners.

The lives of the captives were spared by order of the sovereign; but the stronghold itself was razed to the ground. Arriving on the banks of the steep and unfordable river Charente, Louis was stayed for a moment in his career of conquest. The stream was passable only by a narrow wooden bridge, flanked with the strong towers of the Castle of Taillebourg, which were now in possession of the English, who had disembarked at the mouth of the Garonne a few days before.

Doubt and hesitation, however, soon gave way in the mind of the French sovereign, who was sustained, not less by superstitious notions than by the courage he had inherited from his father and grandfather, and, be it added, from his mother also. He saw that the English force was less than his own, and knowing the weakness and vacillation of Henry, he determined to hazard instant battle. Placing himself at the head of his knights, he rushed across the bridge, and commenced the conflict in person. For some time he is stated to have been in extreme danger, being unsupported, and in the midst of a throng of foes. His critical situation inspired his men with additional ardour. They hastened through all obstacles to his side, and, by their daring as much as by their deeds, so astonished Henry and his luxurious nobles, that, quitting the *melée*, they fairly turned and fled from the field. The rout of the English then became general. Their king in his flight was overtaken and nearly surrounded, when his brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, observing his danger, returned to the rescue. Taking off his helmet and cuirass, he ran forward, with a white wand only in his hand, to the French knights by whom Henry was assailed, and demanded a parley. The victor and the Count D'Artois received the Earl with marked respect, and granted him the boon he craved, of a brief cessation from hostilities. "Go tell the King, your brother," said Louis, "that at your desire I grant him a suspension of arms till to-morrow, that he may have time to deliberate on his situation." The next day the conflict was renewed, amid the numerous cross roads and entangled vineyards and gardens which skirted the walls of Saintes; and the French, a second time successful, not only drove their opponents from the open ground, but invested the town itself, and prepared for an assault. The inhabitants, anxious to avert the consequences of a sack, offered at once to surrender the place: and the troops of Louis were already entering the gates, when Henry was informed of the perils which surrounded him. He was seated at dinner, when he received the intelligence. Quitting the table, he mounted his best horse, and fled with precipitation to Blaye, followed by his knights and men at arms and a multitude of men on foot, many of whom fell, through fatigue, and perished by the way. "The road," says Matthew Paris, "was so strewn with men and horses, exhausted and dying, with abandoned wains and carriages, and broken baggage, that the sight was enough to move tears of pity." The military chest of the English, together with the sacred vessels and ornaments of the moveable chapel royal, with much other valuable spoil, fell into the hands of Louis:—while Henry,

continuing his panic flight from Blaye to Bordeaux, remained in that city long enough to waste in wanton and idle pleasures with his Gascon favourites, the thirty barrels of silver which he had brought with him from England to defray the expenses of the war, and to see all his foreign supporters, one after another, fall away from him, to make their peace with his enemy; and then he sued for a truce of five years, agreeing [7th April, 1243], as the price of the concession, to surrender the island of Rhé, with a number of other fortresses, taken during the winter, and to pay five thousand pounds sterling, by five annual instalments. This done, he took his departure for England, having first summoned his barons to meet him at Portsmouth, in order to receive and welcome him with all the triumphal pomp of a conqueror. The Count de la Marche made his peace with Louis on easy terms, as did also Raymond of Toulouse, and most of the other disaffected vassals of the French crown—the king wisely considering that any conditions were to be deemed cheap, that would rid him of the pestilent league which had been the bane of his life and of his country.

The French monarch indeed had need of repose. Notwithstanding his triumph, he had sustained heavy losses in men and treasures in bringing the war to a termination; and his health, and that of his army generally, had suffered much from the pestiferous atmosphere of the marshes of Aunis and the moors of Guienne. When he returned to Paris he was in such a feeble state, that for many months it was doubtful whether he would ever recover; and once at Pontoise, while he lay sick of a fever, it was disputed in his bed-chamber by the two nurses who watched and attended him, whether life was not actually extinct. On returning consciousness he made a vow, that if it should please Heaven to restore him, he would forthwith take the cross, and make the great pilgrimage in arms for the recovery of the Holy Land. "When the good lady, his mother," says Joinville, "learned that he had recovered his speech, she was transported with such joy as could not be exceeded; but when she afterwards saw him with the cross upon his bosom, and heard from his own lips of his vow and intention, she was struck with a chill, as if she had seen him dead." She endeavoured to reason and remonstrate with him against his quitting the kingdom, and thereby exposing both that and himself to unnecessary hazard and dangers. She even employed the eloquent and pious sophistry of the bishop of Paris, from whom he had received the cross, to dissuade him from fulfilling his purpose. But, though it was argued by the prelate that from the weak state of his mind and body when the vow was made, no obligation rested upon him, and that a dispensation might easily be obtained from the Pope for his absolution, he steadily maintained his purpose, and even registered a new vow, "without farther delay or hesitation to march against the infidels."

Preparations were therefore at once set on foot for the expedition. Louis wrote to the christians of Palestine to inform them of his design; and to the Pope to request that missionaries might be sent forth to preach a new

crusade throughout Europe. It was now speedily seen, however, that the temper of the times had changed. Volunteers came in but slowly, and it occupied four years to raise such a host, as, but half a century before, might have been assembled in six months. The knights and nobles of Christendom, in fact, were occupied with matters of more personal concernment. In England, the subjects of Henry III. were fully engaged in compelling their king to an observance of the charter wrung from his weak and faithless father. Germany and Italy had no leisure from the fierce and interminable quarrels of the Emperor and the Pope; and Spain was in incessant danger from the Saracens who had established themselves in her bosom. Even the barons of France looked with some distrust and repugnance upon what they could not but consider as a capricious fancy of their king; and notwithstanding his importunities, his arguments and his flatteries, a large number absolutely refused to accompany him in any enterprise that should require their absence from the kingdom.

In order to gain a sort of sanction to his venture—at least from his own people—Louis had recourse to a parliament, in which, though few engaged to afford him active aid, none ventured directly to oppose his wishes. The ordinances of the assembly were—that all wars and feuds between the various seigneurs of the realm should be suspended for five years; that no creditors should adopt any coercive measures against their debtors, enlisted in the crusade, for three years; and that the clergy—a measure which had previously received the papal approbation—should pay a tenth of their revenues to the king for defraying the expenses of the expedition. The Duke of Britany and the Counts of Toulouse and la Marche, from whose tarrying at home most danger to the realm was to be apprehended, voluntarily offered to accompany the king; and some others, from the various motives of personal attachment, gratitude, military ambition, and the hope of fame, and a better establishment in Paynim lands than they could command at home, offered to share the dangers and the glory of the pilgrimage. But still no tangible enthusiasm could be created; and Louis, in order to procure even a decent escort of high-born associates, was obliged to have recourse to a stratagem, which in the present day would bear no better name than that of a pious fraud. At the Great Festivals, according to the authorities cited by Sismondi, a custom prevailed for the chief feudal lords to present their vassals with mantles of distinction—an observance still existing in the distribution of new year's gifts (*étrennes*). "The king notified his intention of celebrating mass on Christmas morning before dawn; and each of the numerous courtiers who thronged to this matin service, on his entrance to the royal chapel in the twilight, was invested with a cloak, which he gratefully received as an honourable token of his sovereign's favour. When the sun rose on the wondering congregation, every man perceived his neighbour to be decorated with a red cross, unconscious that a similar badge was embroidered on his own shoulder." This piece of sanctimonious deception, which, while it

strongly marks the manners of the age, "attests the proneness of human nature to measure actions by their results or motives, rather than by any abstract moral standard," had been arranged by the king himself; and so correctly had he estimated the spirit of those upon whom it was practised, that, childish as the juggle may appear to the judgment of critics of the present day, few, if any, of those thus tested were found bold enough to retract the involuntary pledge which had been thus unfairly extracted from them.

Having extended the truce originally agreed upon with Henry of England, and settled the regency, upon terms nearly similar to those exercised during his own minority, upon his mother, Louis rallied his forces, and having gone in procession [12th June, 1248], with the scrip and staff of a pilgrim, to St. Denis, and there received the oriflamme, he commenced his march, accompanied by his wife, who had some time before given birth to a son, and by his brothers Robert of Artois and Charles of Anjou, and followed by about one hundred thousand men at arms to Aigues-Mortes, on the coast of Provence, whence he intended to embark for Cyprus, where, according to previous arrangements with Prince Henry of Lusignan, he intended to winter.

The particulars of this crusade, called that of St. Louis, have been narrated by John, the Lord of Joinville, hereditary High Seneschal of Champagne, who accompanied the king throughout the expedition. The voyage to Cyprus occupied three weeks, and appears to have been barren of incident, except some strange sights and feelings which the sea and the coasts of Barbary conjured up to affright the superstitious pilgrims. Arrived at their winter destination, the multitude beheld piles of wine casks ranged one above another in the open fields, which had been collected two years before, by the care of Louis, to afford sustenance to his followers, and which afar off looked like great houses. There were also similar masses of corn and other provisions, which, having sprouted at the tops, resembled green mountains. In the course of the winter the king had some friendly communication with several Eastern chiefs, described by the chronicler as the Great Cham of Tartary, the King of Armenia, and the Sultan of Babylon, whom he sought, but ineffectually, to convert to the true faith.

A council of war having been held early in the spring, to determine the route to be pursued on quitting Cyprus, it was decided, after some debate, to proceed by way of Egypt. "How," said the advocate of the majority, "shall we be able, supposing we conquer Jerusalem, to maintain that city, unless we also subdue the sultan of Egypt? To strike at the root of the tree, we must sail direct against him to Damietta." A message of defiance was accordingly despatched to the sultan; and on Whitsun-eve, 1249, the expedition once more put to sea. "It was a pleasant sight to see the whole sea as far as the eye could reach, covered with cloth, from the great quantity of sails that were spread to the wind. In four days they reached Damietta,

having had many of their vessels dispersed, and some foundered in a storm; but, though with a less force than he had expected, Louis was determined to land at once, and offer battle to the infidels, who were collected in great force on the shore to oppose him. "Handsome men were the Egyptians to look at, and with their trumpets, kettle drums, and cymbals, they made a noise frightful to hear. The sultan wore arms of burnished gold, of so fine a polish, that when the sun shone on them, he seemed like the sun itself." The invading fleet was moored as near as possible to the shore, which was low and gently shelving. Flat bottomed boats having been provided to convey the men from the larger vessels, these were ranged into three divisions, and the troops having entered them, the oars were plied for land. Joinville was among the first to touch the ground; and as he and his companion knights alighted, they formed a *pavisade* or barrier with their shields, and struck their spears into the sand with the points inclining outward. Against this phalanx the Saracen cavalry made a desperate charge, but being unable to make the least impression, the horsemen wheeled and galloped back to their first position.



As soon as the Oriflamme was landed, Louis sprung from his vessel into the sea, which rose as high as his shoulders, and with his shield round his neck, his helmet on his head, and his sword in his hand, he waded forward, followed by all the princes and nobles of his train, and surrounded

by a shower of arrows and javelins from the foe. An impetuous attack was now made upon the Saracens, who seem to have been so greatly astonished at the firm and persevering daring of the crusaders, that hope forsook them, and they fled—deserting even the powerful and important city of Damietta, after having set fire to its warehouses, without waiting for so much as the advance of the victorious troops. Few were slain in this first adventure, but among those who fell was an Emir of distinction, called, by the christian writers, the Commandant of Damietta, named Nedjm-addin. Louis, the same day, entered the abandoned city, not, however, with the pomp of triumph, but in solemn, religious procession, bareheaded and barefooted, preceded by the Pope's legate, the patriarch of Jerusalem, and the ecclesiastics of the camp, accompanied by his queen, the princes his brothers, and the King of Cyprus, and followed by the lords and principal knights of his army. A solemn thanksgiving was then offered in the great mosque, which was forthwith consecrated as a christian church, and the glory and honour of the victory was ascribed to the Lord.

A council was immediately afterwards held, to determine on the division of the spoil afforded by the stores and treasures of Damietta. According to ancient custom one-third had been invariably apportioned to the commander-in-chief, and the rest distributed, according to rank, among the pilgrims. Louis, however, with more prudent precaution, took possession of the whole booty, and declared that it should be reserved for the purpose of procuring future supplies for the whole army. The subordinate leaders were incensed at this determination, and loudly clamoured against the innovation upon former usages. John de Valeri, indeed, to whose custody the produce of the prizes which were sold was consigned, refused the office; and, though threatened with excommunication for disobedience, he persisted in supporting the views of the malcontents. Thus dissatisfaction was engendered at the very outset; and this was greatly increased both by the exactions made by the royal officers from the sutlers and merchants who followed the camp, and by the disorderly and licentious conduct of an army revelling in plenty. So great was the confusion and want of discipline to which this hostile feeling led, that at one time the sentinels neglected their duty so grossly, that the Saracens frequently entered the camp by night, and carried away the heads of those whom they had massacred in their sleep—receiving from the sultan a golden bezant for each of the mangled trophies brought to him.

Had the king promptly advanced upon Cairo, he would probably have made himself master of that city before the usual overflow of the Nile, and thereby have secured the conquest of Egypt; but he waited for intelligence of his brother Alphonso, of Poitou, till the inundation had commenced, and then the march could not be undertaken until it had subsided. Five months were thus wasted, and it was not till the 20th of November that the crusaders were able to move onward from Damietta. The advance, however, was still a difficult one. On reaching that point of the Nile where the river divides

into two branches, it was found that the arm called the Tanis, which it was necessary to pass, was so broad and deep, that it could not be forded; and as the pilgrims had neither boats nor bridges, they were obliged to construct a mole or dam by which to cross. In this, nevertheless, they totally failed, as the current, and the Saracens who guarded the opposite bank, destroyed in the night time all the labour of the previous day, and the Egyptians, by means of Greek fire—a composition of naptha, bitumen, and sulphur—in spite of all efforts at defence, burned every wooden erection as fast as it was put up. Of the effect and mode of using the strange fire, which proved so destructive and terrible, a graphic account has been furnished to us by Joinville. "In appearance," he says, "it was like a large tun, and its tail was the length of a long spear; the noise which it made was like to thunder, and it seemed a great dragon of fire flying through the air, giving so great a light with its flame, that we saw in our camp as clearly as in broad day. . . . Every time that the good king himself heard a discharge of this fire, he fell upon the ground, and with extended arms, and eyes turned to heaven, he cried with a loud voice, at the same time shedding heavy tears, 'Good Lord God, Jesus Christ, preserve me and all my people.'"

Thus baffled, a delay of three months longer ensued, at the end of which it was seriously debated in the camp whether all further attempts ought not to be abandoned, and the troops withdrawn to Damietta. At this time, however, a fugitive Bedouin Arab came to the king, and offered for a reward of five hundred bezants to shew the christians a ford which might be crossed by cavalry. But though the guide was true to his promise, the impatient rashness of the Count of Artois had nearly endangered the army. Having obtained command of the van, this bold chief not only passed the stream, but, seeing the enemy in his front waver, as if irresolute, he dashed forward with about two thousand horse, pursued the flying enemy with much slaughter into and through the town of Mansourah to the plain beyond, where, finding a strong force drawn out to meet him, he saw the necessity of relinquishing his mad chace, and returning to rejoin the main body of the army. On re-entering the town he had so recently galloped through in triumph, however, he was surprised to find the narrow streets filled with archers and armed inhabitants, who, setting upon him with arrows, javelins, stones, scalding water, and all sorts of missiles, threw his comrades into confusion, and slaughtered the greater portion of them. The count himself, with three hundred of his knights, and nearly as many templars, perished in this ill-advised encounter. Indeed, all engaged in it, except only the Duke of Britany and the grand master of the templars, are said to have been killed.

Louis, hearing of his brother's danger, but not of his death, hastened forward to his relief. The king is thus described by Joinville as he appeared at the moment. "I never saw so handsome a man under arms. He was taller by the shoulders than any of his troops; his helmet, which was gilded, was gracefully placed on his head, and he bore a German sword in his two

hands." The battle becoming general, was now fought man to man, with sabres, battle-axes, and the butts of spears, and Louis bore himself most gallantly. Wherever the throng of conflict was thickest, there the king was certain to be seen, bearing succour to those in the greatest jeopardy, and animating all. At one time, by his own right hand, he extricated himself from as many as six Saracens, who had seized the bridle of his horse, and were leading him away prisoner. The Egyptian footmen directed most of their efforts against the horses—fighting as they did intermingled with the cavalry; thus, a greater number than might have been looked for of the chivalry of France were dismounted, and had to fight, under all the disadvantages of their heavy armour and unwieldy weapons, on foot. The chivalrous chronicler, Joinville, received five wounds, and his second horse—he had been stricken senseless from the first—five and twenty. Yet the preservation of the French appears to have been altogether due to the brave seneschal's valour and perseverance in defending a bridge, which had become an object of the highest importance at the close of the engagement.

At night, the French remained in possession of the field of fight, and therefore claimed the victory; but their loss had been far more severe than that of their opponents; and the mere withdrawal of the Arabs was rather a portion of their ordinary tactics, than any evidence of defeat. The crusaders were in fact fairly matched; and victorious, or not, they were compelled, against their inclination, to sustain a new attack on the following morning at dawn, with no better, if not worse success, than on the preceding day. The division of the Count of Anjou was totally defeated, and the prince himself placed in a position of the greatest danger. His deliverance was effected by the king in person, who, "galloping into the midst of the battle, lance in hand, gave most deadly blows to the Saracens, hastening always to where he saw the greatest crowds. He sustained many hard blows; and himself and his horse were covered with Greek fire." This fire, it seems, being showered incessantly among the christians, destroyed whatever it lighted upon, whether men, horses, or military engines. The battalion, led by the Grand Master of the Templars, fared nearly as ill as that of the Count of Anjou. The master, who had lost one eye in the first action, lost the other in the second, and before evening was slain. The Count of Poitou was at one time taken prisoner, and was rescued only by a tumultuous but timely charge of the camp-followers of both sexes. The Saracens at nightfall again drew off their forces; and Louis consequently claimed another victory: but his language in announcing the fact was anything but confident or boastful. "This Friday which is now passed," he said, "we have defended ourselves against the Saracens, very many of us being without arms, while they were completely armed, on horseback, and on their own ground." It could not fail to strike the king, while thus expressing himself, that, however bravely his followers had defended themselves, they had won no glory, and done nothing towards the recovery of

those sacred shrines which it was the object of their invasion to rescue from unhallowed hands ; and, moreover, that whatever might have been the losses of the Arabs in the conflict, their numbers could be easily replaced, while the death of every soldier that fell in the ranks of the French was an irreparable loss. A dreary duty remained to be performed after these battles were ended. The pious king employed a hundred labourers to separate the bodies of the christians from those of the Saracens ; and while the former were interred, the latter were thrust into the river, and floated down to the sea.

The enemy did not assemble again immediately, and the crusaders, unable to advance, lay in their quarters awaiting them. Before a fortnight had elapsed a new and even more deadly foe made its appearance. The current of the Nile was nearly choked by dead bodies, which, beginning to float, spread a pestilential miasma along the margin of the river. "God knows," says Joinville, "how noisome was the smell, and how miserable it was to see the bodies of such noble and worthy persons lie exposed. I beheld the chamberlain of the late Count of Artois seeking the body of his master, and many more hunting after those of their friends ; but none who were exposed to the infectious smell, while engaged in this office, ever regained their health. Fatal diseases, in consequence thereof, broke out in the army ; the limbs of many were dried up and destroyed, and almost all were seized with a complaint in the mouth, from which many never recovered. The chief sustenance of the army at this season—Lent had recently commenced—was of the most loathsome kind—the eel-pouts of the Nile, "which is a glutinous fish and feeds upon dead bodies.... The groans of the sufferers seemed like to the cries of women in labour. The flesh on our legs was dried up to the bone, and our skins became tanned as black as the ground, or like an old boot that has lain long behind a coffer."

The supplies sent from time to time, meanwhile, from Damietta, were intercepted by the enemy, who, having dragged galleys overland, and launched them again below the French position, had excluded all communication by water ; and so ill were the christians provided with intelligence, that they did not learn the cause of the interruption through which they were made to suffer so greatly, until the captain of a vessel which had forced a passage, informed them that no less than fourscore galleys had already been captured in attempts to reach the camp with provisions. Retreat was now determined upon, as the only means of saving even a wreck of the army : but preparatory to commencing this retrograde movement an effort was made at negotiation. The conditions required by the Saracens were—that the king and several other leaders of the crusade should be delivered up as hostages, till the invading army should have quitted the territories of Egypt. Louis, it is said, would have consented to these terms, but they were rejected with indignation by his companions. "Better die by the sword," said Geoffrey de Sargines, "than endure the reproach of having pawned our sovereign." Diplomacy, accordingly, was abandoned, and the retreat began [April 5, 1250.]

The horrors of this backward journey exceeded all that had previously been witnessed. On the very evening when the camp broke up, as Joinville with the only two that remained of the company of knights who had followed him from Champagne, were stepping into their vessel to descend the Nile, they saw, as the night fell, by the glare of the fires which the king had ordered to be kindled to cherish the sick, a number of Saracens enter the camp, and murder those unhappy sufferers, while lying on the bank of the river, awaiting their turn for embarkation. In the haste manifested by the French to fly from this scene of danger and dismay, the crews of some of the larger galleys cut their cables, and nearly ran down and sank those which had preceded them in escaping. The vessel of Joinville was shot at with cross-bows from the royal barque, because it had sailed before the issue of orders to that effect. By sunrise next morning, the fugitives found themselves in the neighbourhood of the Saracen galleys stationed on the river to blockade the passage from Damietta. On one bank was a body of French horse in rapid flight, and on the other a number of Arabs engaged in plundering some captured vessels, and putting their prisoners to the sword. Joinville's sailors, when called upon to run their galley ashore among the other spoils, were preparing to do the contrary, and to steer for the opposite bank, when the seneschal, though weak from fatigue and disease, and needing help, stood up, cased in his armour, and, with his sword in his hand, said he would put to death the first man who should attempt to move the vessel; as he hoped, though they must needs be taken in any case, for better treatment if they remained together and unseparated, than they had reason to expect disunited. Four large galleys then bore down on him. His chaplain advised them not to surrender, but that every man should die fighting, which would secure them a place in Paradise. This advice, failing to impart the consolation intended, appears to have dispelled all remains of courage in every one who heard it. The crew instantly surrendered. A Saracen at that instant came up to Joinville, and embracing him, entreated, if he valued his life, that he would instantly quit his own vessel, and submit in all things to his friend. Having made the seneschal fast with a rope, the Arab plunged into the water, supported his charge, and conveyed him safely to shore. As they passed along, the Christian knight was in great danger of being torn to pieces, but his pagan protector, standing firmly by him, exclaimed with great pomp and animation to the throng, "Make way—it is the cousin of the king!" "I felt," says the simple, single-hearted chronicler, "the knife at my throat, and would fain have prostrated myself with resignation before God, having no hope of escaping the rage which prevailed around me; but it pleased Heaven to deliver me by means of this poor Saracen, who conducted me to the quarters of the chief officers of the Sultan's army. There they took pity on me, took off my coat of mail, and spread a couch for me to rest upon: yet still I trembled to the teeth; partly through fear, and partly through the fever under which I laboured. I asked to drink, and they readily brought me

water; but I had no sooner tasted it than it almost suffocated me, and returned through my nostrils, for I had a large ulcer in my throat; and God only knows the pain which I endured. I sent for my people and told them I was dying—that I could not live. They saw me helpless, and wept with exceeding great lamentation. The poor Saracen asked why they wept, and being told the cause, he ran to a physician and procured a draught, which, with the blessing of God, cured me in two days.”

Louis, meanwhile, though grievously afflicted with dysentery, refused to go by water, but marched with the main body of his army along the bank of the Nile. His sole personal attendant, when he reached the village of Kiarceh, was Geoffrey de Sargines, who kept off the advancing Mamlouks “with vigorous strokes of the blade and point of his sword, and defended him in like manner as a faithful servant does the cup of his master from flies.” So weak and exhausted, however, was the king at Kiarceh, that he was obliged to be assisted from his horse, and to be borne for repose into a house, where he lay down with his head placed in the lap of a woman who had come from Paris, thinking that every moment would be his last, for he had no hope that he should see that day pass before his death. The Saracens in pursuit speedily came up to the village; but Walter de Châtillon maintained himself for a long time single-handed against all assailants, at the entrance of the narrow street in which the king had sought refuge. Right and left he dealt the most deadly strokes with his sabre upon the pagans who sought to approach; till his shield was rendered so heavy with the weight of arrows lodged within it, that he could no longer sustain it. Still, from time to time, after a moment’s rest, he continually returned to the combat, and rushed among the gathering infidels, crying with all his strength, “To Châtillon, knights! to Châtillon!” The knights, nevertheless, neglected his appeal, having their own safety to provide for; and at last, overpowered by numbers, Walter was slain. His fate was made known by the condition of his horse, which was seen covered with blood in the possession of a Saracen, who claimed the honour of having killed its gallant rider.

Sir Philip de Montfort, in the same village, having recognised an Emir, with whom he had formerly held parley, obtained the king’s ready permission to negotiate for a truce. The Emir, consenting, delivered his ring as a pledge of fidelity; but an unexpected incident cut short all further proceedings on that score. A French herald, either misinformed or panic-stricken, whom Joinville, however, characterises, as a “villanous traitor of an apostate serjeant, named Marcel,” proclaimed aloud that the king commanded his knights to surrender, as the only means of saving his life or their own; and the supposed order having been obeyed, the Emir, turning to De Montfort, remarked that it was wholly unnecessary to enter upon terms for a truce with men who were already his prisoners. The king submitted to his lot with becoming dignity.

The treatment of the greater portion of the prisoners who were taken at

this period may be gathered from Joinville. After having been detained for five days, during which, his chaplain and all who were supposed to be infected with any malady were put to death, the seneschal was called upon to embrace the Mohammedan faith—as, it was told him, all his sailors had done, in order to preserve their lives. For himself, the pious soldier at once refused, and added, “If my followers have made such a profession under the influence of terror, so soon as they shall regain their liberty and safety, they will return to the creed of Christianity.”—“I believe thee,” said the Moslem admiral. “It was a saying of Saladin that there never was of a Christian a good Saracen, nor of a Saracen a good Christian.” He was then conveyed to the spot where the king and his knights were held prisoners. At the entrance of a large pavilion he found a person, who, by order of the Sultan, wrote down the names of all the captives; and this being done, the new comers were introduced to the presence of the barons of France, who, with more than a thousand other persons, received them with great joy, as thinking that they had perished. “We had not been long together,” says the chronicler, “when a Saracen of high rank came and ordered me in to another and less agreeable pavilion—adjoining to which was a large court where many knights and other prisoners were kept. These being brought out one by one, were asked if they would renounce the Christian faith, and become Saracens, when such as consented were set apart, and those that declined were instantly beheaded. From this painful scene, however, our attention was soon diverted by a message from the Sultan to Pierre, Count of Britany, enquiring whether we desired our liberty, and what we would pay as our ransom. That we panted for freedom, the count replied, there could be no doubt; and he added that we were willing to give all the ransom that was reasonable and in our power. The Sultan’s envoy demanded the surrender of such of the fortresses belonging to the Emperor of Germany, as were situated in Asia, which the count replied were not ours to give. We were then required to yield up some of the strongholds belonging to the Knights of the Temple, or to the Hospitallers of Rhodes; but to this the count answered for us, that its performance was no less out of our power, and that such places were held under a solemn oath, never to be surrendered for the deliverance of any man or class of men whatever. Then, said the messenger, I perceive that you have no ardent desire for deliverance, and I shall send to you the executioners; and having so spoken, he returned to the Sultan.

The Sultan, however, seems to have preferred a profitable bargain with his captives to the alternative of taking their lives. After waiting for some time in expectation of death, the prisoners were informed that the king had succeeded with the Sultan in making terms for their preservation. Similar menaces, it was then ascertained, to those employed on the barons had been used against Louis himself. He and his company had been threatened with *bernicles*—a species of torture which was used to break and dislocate the

bones of the legs, and at the same time, to bruise and wound the body. The reply of the monarch compromised him in no wise. "I am your prisoner," he said, "do with me as you please." Finding that violence would extort nothing, the sultan became more mild and reasonable, and sent to demand what sum of money the king was willing to pay, in addition to surrendering Damietta, which was set down as the prime and indispensable condition of the treaty. To this Louis replied that, if a reasonable ransom was named, he would write to his queen, who still remained at Damietta, to pay it for him and for his army. The Saracens, whose laws and prejudices prohibit the interference of women in matters of public council, asked with surprise, wherefore the queen should be consulted in such a matter. "Because," said Louis, "she is my wife and companion." A final message informed the king that his ransom had been fixed by the sultan at eight hundred thousand golden bezants—a sum equal to about five hundred thousand livres French. At once, and without any attempt to procure an abatement, the offer was accepted; and the sultan, struck with the liberality of his prisoner, and with a spirit of emulation, immediately agreed to remit a portion of the price. "He is," said the Saracen, "a right generous Frank, who does not cheapen our first offer like a merchant or a pedlar; tell him I abate one fifth of my demand; and that four hundred thousand livres shall be held as sufficient ransom." He at the same time sent garments for the king's use, and seemed disposed to part with him on the most liberal and amicable terms.

Scarcely, however, had this treaty been satisfactorily arranged ere one of those sudden revolutions which are of such frequent occurrence in Eastern states, broke forth in Egypt, and by depriving the sultan of his life, once more placed the safety of Louis and his nobles in jeopardy. The Mamlouks having assassinated their chief, tore his heart from the yet palpitating body, and thrusting it almost into the face of the French king, exclaimed, "What wilt thou give to him who has slain the enemy that sought thy life?" Louis made no answer; but, expecting to be immediately put to death, he and his barons confessed themselves to each other, and prepared to meet their fate. The avarice of the Saracens, however, prevailed over their thirst for blood, and it was finally agreed that the convention which had been concluded with the sultan, should be fulfilled, and that the christians should be set at liberty. Damietta was accordingly surrendered; but here a new scene of outrage and perfidy was disclosed. The infidels, after drinking to intoxication of the wines which they found in the city, set fire to the military engines of the French, which they had stipulated to restore unharmed, and killed all the sick and wounded, whom they had agreed to protect. It was debated by them, indeed, whether they should not put to death the king and his attendants; but on its being remarked that the crusaders were still able to make a gallant defence, and that the issue of the conflict might still be doubtful, this project was abandoned, and the knights were allowed to embark for Acre.

While these ruthless proceedings were in progress, the queen of France endured the most intense tortures both of mind and body. The news of her husband's captivity was conveyed to her only three days before she gave birth to a child, and "so troubled was she," says Joinville, "that she seemed continually to see her chamber filled with Saracens, and she incessantly kept crying out 'help, help,' when there was not a soul near her. An aged knight, fourscore years old, or perhaps more, was appointed to watch at the foot of her bed without sleeping, and every time she screamed, he held her hands, and said, 'Madam, do not be thus alarmed; I am with you; quit your fears.' Before the good lady was brought to bed, she ordered every person to leave her chamber except this ancient knight, when she cast herself out of her bed on her knees before him, and requested that he would grant her a boon. The knight with an oath promised compliance, and the queen then said, 'Sir Knight, I request on the oath you have sworn, that should the Saracens storm this town and take it, you will cut off my head before they seize my person.' The knight replied that he would cheerfully do so, and that he had before thought of it, in case such an event should happen." Shortly afterwards, the queen was delivered of a son, who was named John *Tristan*, in allusion to the sad situation of his parents at the time of his birth; and before her perfect recovery, she was compelled to arise and undertake the voyage to Acre.

Of all the two thousand eight hundred knights who had embarked with Louis from Cyprus in the preceding year, but one hundred remained when he landed at Acre; and this number was destined to be still farther diminished by an epidemic. Joinville, who was attacked by this disease, had not a single attendant left to comfort him on his bed of sickness; but counted twenty funerals daily as they passed his window. Any endeavour to prosecute the crusade with such a force was hopeless; and Louis, consequently, after putting the fortresses of Acre, Cæsarea, Joppa, and some other important places into a better state of defence, returned to his own kingdom.

During the crusade, the internal administration of the affairs of France underwent little change. The regency of Queen Blanche had been disturbed by a popular movement, not so much the result of discontent, as an effervescence of loyalty. Matthew Paris states that the outbreak, which was called the "Crusade of Shepherds," had its origin in a promise made by a renegade Hungarian to the Sultan of Babylon (Cairo), in whose service he was engaged, that he would give the Saracens an opportunity of capturing a vast multitude of christians, and of invading France while her king was a prisoner. This man, who appeared as an itinerant preacher, imbued with the fanatical spirit which had animated Peter the Hermit, propounded a notion that the pride of chivalry was offensive to God, who reserved the deliverance of the Holy Land for the herdsman and the shepherd. The Virgin Mary, he said, had announced this message from Heaven; and he held in his hand a written paper, which he pretended to contain the

mandate of the Mother of God. Blanche, the regent, at first favoured and protected this daring impostor, believing probably that, through his means, powerful aid might be procured for her sons, the news of whose captivity had now spread throughout Europe; but when it was found that the number who



had embarked in the expedition exceeded a hundred thousand men, comprising the vilest and worst of the population—thieves, outlaws, runaways, and excommunicated persons—and that their doctrines were anything but orthodox, she became alarmed, and permitted the bishop of Orléans to issue an anathema against all who should join them, or attend their heretical preachings. A tumult consequently ensued, in which the library of the university of Orléans was plundered, its choicest works delivered to the flames, and about five-and-twenty priests were barbarously massacred; besides a large number of clerks and citizens, who were much hurt and wounded in the fray. This aroused the indignation of the people throughout the kingdom, and orders were issued by the regent for the immediate suppression of the *Shepherds*, who were accordingly forthwith attacked and dispersed. The Hungarian himself fled to Bourges, where, having failed in the performance of certain miracles which he had invited the populace to witness, he was killed with a hatchet by one of the rabble, and his corpse being thrown into

a cross way without the walls, was left there to be devoured by dogs. Two other bands of fanatics which appeared about the same time at Marseilles and Bordeaux, were speedily overwhelmed and punished by the strong hand of justice.

In the South of France, meanwhile, every thing proceeded, if not as calmly as might have been desired, at least as fortunately for French ascendancy. Count Raymond of Toulouse, after having repudiated all the liberal ideas of his youth, become reconciled to the church of Rome, patronised the Inquisition, and pursued in his own person a fierce persecution of heretics, had died, and left his territories to the quiet possession of his son-in-law, the Count of Poitou, who, on returning from the crusade in 1250, received the homage of the Provençal nobles without the exaction of any other stipulation on their part, than that he would pay the legacies, and fulfil the terms of the will of the deceased count. Charles of Anjou, who had come back with Alphonso, found his own principality in a different condition. Marseilles, Aix, Nice, Arles and Avignon, were in open revolt; and it was necessary to lead an army against the insurgents, ere their foresworn allegiance could be recovered. Queen Blanche, whose health appears to have been grievously shattered by the intelligence of her son's imprisonment in Egypt, and who was now sixty-five years old, was, shortly after these events, seized at Melun with mortal sickness; when having caused herself to be conveyed to Paris, to take the veil of a Cistercian nun in the abbey of



Maubuisson, that she might die in the odour of sanctity, she expired on the 1st of December 1253.

The government of the kingdom now fell into the hands of the two

princes; but Louis having heard of his bereavement, and knowing what reliance was to be placed upon the faith of brothers against the strong allurements of power and ambition, hastened his return to France with all expedition, and landed on the 10th of July 1254. "Sad and joyless," says Matthew Paris, "was his slow and solemn progress to his capital. Recalling to mind the circumstances of his captivity, together with all the misery and confusion thereby occasioned to the Christian cause, he was no longer able to smile, or take pleasure in instruments of music or in gay discourse. The homage and acclamations of his subjects, who thronged to welcome him on his passage, had no power to suppress his sighs, or to make him raise his eyes from the earth, on which they were constantly fixed."

This morbid melancholy, however, from which he appears never thoroughly to have recovered, did not prevent him, immediately after his return, from bestowing due care and attention upon the affairs of his realm. He began by endeavouring to suppress the private wars and feuds between his nobles, which had greatly increased during his absence, and by limiting the cases to be decided by judicial combat. He then turned his attention to the authority claimed by the ecclesiastical courts, and, after a long struggle, succeeded in reducing the odious immunities of the clergy—the Pope eventually giving his sanction to an ordinance, which provided that, for any flagrant and enormous crimes, in which guilt was evident, priests, after degradation from their orders, might become amenable to the same tribunals as laymen. In his own dominions he administered justice with the utmost impartiality, and became so celebrated for his scrupulous observance of the laws, that numbers, "who were not his vassals, flocked to his court to have their quarrels decided—English, Germans, Burgundians, and people of Lorraine."

A treaty of peace was concluded in 1259 with Henry III. of England, in which the latter relinquished all claim to Normandy, Touraine, Anjou, Maine and Poitou, and consented to do homage for Perigord, Limousin, Agenois, and parts of Quercy and Saintonge. The French barons were greatly opposed to this settlement, seeing that the English sovereign, by reason of the growing disaffection of his subjects in all parts of his dominions, could not possibly have maintained any portion of his continental estates by force of arms. "Sire," said they, "we marvel greatly how you can consent to allow the king of England to hold so large a tract of your territories which your predecessor conquered from him for ill conduct, and which, it seems, you have not duly considered, nor will he be any way grateful for it." To which the king answered, that he was well aware the king of England and his predecessors had justly forfeited the lands they held, and that he meant to restore no more than he was in justice bound to do; but he should make this restitution, in order to strengthen and confirm the union which ought to exist between them as near relatives. By thus acting, he conceived he should be doing a very good work. In the first place, a peace would be

established; and next, Henry would become a vassal of France, which he had not previously been, as he had never done homage. Pursuing the same pacific policy, Louis shortly afterwards concluded a convention with the king of Aragon, by which he surrendered all claims to that portion of Catalonia called the Spanish Marche, which had been nominally annexed to France since the time of Charlemagne, but in which no actual rights or dominion had ever been established; and in return for this cession, the Spanish king relinquished all pretension to feudal superiority over the possessions of the ancient Counts of Toulouse. This amicable adjustment was ratified in 1262 by the marriage of Isabella, the daughter of James of Aragon, to Philippe, eldest surviving son of the king of France.

The profound wisdom of these measures has been universally admitted. Besides setting at rest a multitude of questions, which, whenever occasion



offered, were sure to be seized as pretexts for vexation and hostility, the king gained a degree of popularity, which, at the same time that it strengthened

his rule in his own land, procured him unbounded honour and esteem from foreign princes. His laws were equally wise ; and, be it added, much more humane in their provisions than any of those which they superseded. The barons were deprived of much of their power over the property and persons of their vassals, and the latter more readily obtained hearing and redress in the royal courts when they carried thither complaints of injustice against their superiors. In order, indeed, to encourage the humble to make their grievances known, the king frequently sat in person in the open air as a judge, and decided such causes as were brought before him. "Seated on the grass, within shadow of the wood of Vincennes," says Joinville, "and dressed in a robe of camlet, he was accustomed to give audience and render justice to his people," like one of those ancient kings of Judah who feared the Lord, and walked according to His commandments. And among the rest of his acts, it must not be forgotten that, notwithstanding the superstitious reverence which he entertained for churchmen and their dogmas, to St. Louis France was indebted for the edict called the *Pragmatic Sanction*, which laid the foundation of the liberties of the Gallican Church—in guaranteeing the freedom of ecclesiastical elections, the rights of collation and patronage in benefices, and in rendering the decrees of the Pope inoperative throughout the kingdom, until they had received the assent of the king and of the national church.

The character of Charles of Anjou, the king's brother, offered a strange contrast to that of Louis. Villani calls him "the terrible count,—a man of darkness, who seldom slept;" and all writers who speak of him, concur in describing him as a bold, ambitious, cruel and unscrupulous prince, with little respect for justice or equity, dreaded in his own territories for his oppressive tyranny, and hated, wherever he was known, for the remorselessness with which he had deprived the cities of Arles, Avignon, and Marseilles of their independence, and for the terror and misery he had inflicted in what direction soever his footsteps had been turned. This man, during the closing years of his royal brother's life, was destined to become an actor, on his own account, in a larger arena than is usually left open for junior princes, and in a drama which was in every way worthy of him.

The death of the Emperor Frederic II. in 1250, had been followed, in less than four years, by the decease of his son and successor, Conrad IV., and by the dethronement of his grandson Conradin, an infant. Manfred, an illegitimate son of Frederic, had at this time accomplished a revolution in Sicily, and usurped the government ; but the See of Rome, whose hatred to the whole imperial family was unbounded, set up a claim of its own to Naples as a papal fief, and assumed the right of disposing of the realm at its pleasure. To the empire itself, indeed, pretensions were made by Alexander IV. who hoped to have the crown conferred on a prince in the Guelphic interest ; but the electoral princes of Germany evincing a disposition to maintain their independence against all intruders, whether Pope or layman,

farther interference in that quarter was abandoned, and the sceptre of the two Sicilies alone was put up for competition. It was first offered to King Henry III. for his second son Edmund; but the state of England, where the barons were constantly revolting against their sovereign, being such as to preclude the necessary military preparations for taking possession with the sword of the pontiff's gift, Urban IV., the successor of Alexander, next tendered his present to Louis IX. for one of his sons or brothers. The pious king had many scruples of conscience as to the course which he ought to pursue in the matter; for, although Manfred was clearly an usurper, and as such might be lawfully attacked and dethroned, yet Conradin was still living, and was legitimate heir to his father's possessions, and, independently of this, Edmund of England had been proclaimed king by the Pope, and had committed no act of forfeiture. Charles of Anjou had no regard for such nice considerations to prevent him for profiting by whatsoever offered for his advantage; and the moment his brother declined the proffered honour for his children, the count stepped forward and solicited it for himself. Louis gave a ready acquiescence to the suit—glad, perhaps, of the prospect of being rid of so dangerous a relative—and Charles was soon afterwards invested with the dignity of king of Naples. A fleet was then speedily equipped, and an army collected for the invasion, and, in the beginning of the year 1265, the new sovereign and his forces mustered beneath the walls of Rome, whence, having received from Clement IV., who had just succeeded Urban, the titles of Senator of Rome, Seigneur of the republic of Florence, and Arbiter of the destinies of all the Lombard towns, he marched to the plains of Beneventum to give battle to his adversaries. A single engagement decided the claims of the rivals. Manfred's army was totally defeated, and he himself was slain at Grandella on the 26th of February 1266, upon which most of the towns and fortresses in the kingdom submitted without opposition to the victor. The domination of a foreigner, however, and that foreigner Charles of Anjou, was especially odious to the Italians, who, on the appearance among them in 1268 of Conradin, their legitimate prince, rallied round his standard in such formidable numbers as threatened the dissolution of the French supremacy at a blow. One battle, however, again decided the contest. Conradin's force was overwhelmed at Tagliacozzo, and the youthful warrior being taken prisoner on the field, was brought before a mock tribunal, condemned and hurried to death upon a scaffold.

Meanwhile, Louis IX., still brooding over his old disasters in the East and the distresses of the Christians there, was alarmed by intelligence that the Sultan of Egypt had appeared before Acre with an army of thirty thousand Mamlouks, determined to chase the Crusaders utterly from his territories. Cæsarea, Sidon and Jaffa successively fell into the hands of the infidels; and at last it was ascertained that Ascalon had been captured, twenty-seven thousand of its inhabitants massacred, and one hundred thousand more reduced to slavery. All the enthusiasm and indignation of Louis were now

aroused, and without hesitation he resumed the cross and immediately set on foot preparations for a new crusade. In vain his friends endeavoured to dissuade him from this rash enterprise. In vain was it urged that "as long as he remained in his kingdom of France, everything went on well, and all lived peaceably and in security, but that the moment he left it things began to decline." The king would not be turned from his purpose; but vowed that, by this expedition, he would repair all former miscarriages, and put an end to the oppressions and sufferings inflicted upon the Christians both in Egypt and Palestine.

The necessary preliminaries having been arranged and a regency appointed, the armament, carrying, besides the king and his troops, the princes of the royal family, and the heir to the English throne, Edward Prince of Wales, sailed from Aigues-Mortes on the 1st of July 1270. From that moment, however, everything went wrong. Scarcely had the vessels put from shore, ere water and provisions failed, and an alarming mortality in consequence broke out among the pilgrims. At Cagliari, in Sardinia, where the troops were landed for a short time to recruit their strength, disaffection was added to disease; and here Louis, in order as much to gratify the impatience of his refractory followers, as in accordance with some notion which he entertained, that Muley-Mostança, with whom he had recently been on terms of friendly intercourse, would abjure the Moslem faith and embrace Christianity on his appearance, suddenly announced his intention of proceeding to Tunis instead of Syria. So long, it may be remembered, as an attack was made upon *the infidels* it mattered little to the Crusaders what country was invaded; and Tunis, above all places, was reputed to abound in wealth, and would consequently afford an immense booty to its plunderers.

Charles of Anjou is generally believed to have been the originator of this movement. The ancient port of Carthage had once been tributary to Sicily, and the conqueror of Naples, anxious to add so rich a prize to his territories, and being unable to raise sufficient strength of his own to cope with the adversary whom he desired to dispossess, found means to persuade his brother that when once master of Tunis, there would be no obstacle in the way to Cairo, the key of Palestine. He is said to have added that, if the route indicated by himself were pursued, he would join the French with a large number of troops and seamen; but that he would hold aloof from the enterprise altogether, should any other course be taken.

A landing was effected on the 18th of July 1270, on a desert spot near the ancient home of Hannibal and St. Augustine, and at the end of three days occupied the ruins of Carthage, where his followers ruthlessly put to death all the miserable Moslems, whom the rumour of invasion had attracted to the spot, whether as defenders of their native soil or merely as curious spectators. The king of Tunis, on receiving intelligence of these unprovoked outrages, from a power which but a few months before had received and entertained his ambassadors with the utmost amity and distinction, sent a messenger to

the French camp, to remind the Christians that great numbers who held the same faith as themselves, were residing in his dominions, whose lives would be forfeited if the Crusaders attempted to advance; but stating at the same time that they should all be released from imprisonment, to which they had just been consigned, the moment the Crusaders should re-embark. St. Louis however persisted, so far as to pitch his tent and set up his standard amid the ruins of the ancient capital of Africa. But this was all that could be accomplished. The burning sun, the want of water and provisions, and the excesses of the soldiers of the cross, soon engendered pestilence in their ranks, which daily swept away a multitude; while clouds of Moorish horsemen hovered around the entrenchments, and cut off every straggler that dared to make his appearance. Ophthalmia, dysentery and malaria soon completed the work of disorganization and destruction; till the camp presented the aspect of a vast charnel house, and scarcely a soldier could be seen who was not disabled and exhausted. Prince Philippe and his younger brother John-Tristan, Count of Nevers, were soon numbered among the infected, and the latter, after a struggle of three or four days, fell a victim to his malady. Cardinal D'Albi, the papal legate, also died; and Alphonso, Count of Toulouse, narrowly escaped a similar fate. The king himself at last was seized with fatal symptoms, and terror and dismay were then at the highest among all ranks and classes. Louis, seeing that his case was hopeless, called his son Philippe, though scarcely recovered from his sickness, to his death-bed, and, after delivering to him sundry instructions concerning the principles upon which his own policy had been framed, and by which he wished his successor to be guided, and taking the last sacraments of his church, he yielded up his spirit on the 25th of August, after a reign of forty-four years, and at the age of fifty-five. The "Instructions" as cited by Thibaut, Count of Champagne, contained the following passage, which is too characteristic of the life and reign of the deceased king to be omitted. "My son," said the expiring monarch, "the first lesson I would impress upon thee, and command thee to observe, is, that, with all thy soul, and above every thing, thou lovest God and keepest thine heart open with kindness and compassion for the poor. Look diligently that all thy subjects live under thy rule in peace and rectitude, most especially in the good towns and cities of France, whose franchises and liberties thou must maintain, holding the people ever in thy love and favour; for by the wealth and power of thy faithful towns, thine enemies and adversaries, particularly thine equals and barons, will be restrained from assailing or seeking to disturb thee. I implore thee, my son, to preserve my memory when I am dead, and to provide for the peace and repose of my soul; and finally I bestow upon thee all the benedictions which father ever invoked upon his child, praying to all the Heavenly Trinity—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—to protect and defend thee from all evil." The heart and bones of the deceased king were subsequently conveyed to Paris and buried, first at St. Dénis, and,

after the lapse of twenty-seven years, when Louis was canonized by Pope Boniface VIII., the hallowed relics were removed to the shrine which the saint himself had constructed during his life time, and were placed in the sanctuary of *La Sainte Chapelle*. The flesh of the pious pilgrim, which had been separated from the bones by being boiled in wine and water, was conveyed to Palermo, and, with the entrails, interred with much pomp in a splendid sepulchre, erected there by the King of the two Sicilies.

Philippe III., *le Hardi*, was about twenty-five years old when he began to reign, afar from the land over which his power extended, and in the midst of sickness, death, and a hopeless enterprise. The anxieties of the new sovereign under such cheerless circumstances, can scarcely be over-estimated; but, as if the misfortunes of the crusade had been intended to affect Louis alone, on the same evening on which he died, the white sails of the King of Naples were descried making for the port of Carthage, and Charles of Anjou speedily afterwards made his appearance, with banners flying and trumpets sounding, in the Christian camp, bringing abundance of provisions and reinforcements. The silence of the Crusaders first intimated to their friends that there was deep woe and mourning within the entrenchments. Charles hastened to his departed brother's tent and wept; not so much, it has been suggested, from sorrow as from vexation, for, by hard and selfish nature, he had little sensibility, but he had penetration enough to perceive that the golden chance for which he had sighed, of extending his sway along the shores of Africa, had passed with the spirit of the king of France, and that the treasure which he had lavished to bring aid across the sea was wasted and thrown away. He took the command, notwithstanding, of such forces as could still be mustered—not, however, to fight, but to negotiate, and, after a delay of two months, succeeded in wringing from Muley-Mostança a treaty of peace, the stipulations of which were, that the king of Tunis should release all the Christians whom he had placed in chains; permit the free exercise of their worship in his dominions; open his ports to European merchants generally; defray the costs of the war with a payment of two hundred and ten thousand ounces of gold; and yield an annual tribute of twenty thousand doubloons to the king of Sicily. The crusaders on their part were required to do nothing more in exchange for these manifold advantages than to embark and quit the coast which they had so causelessly violated.

The adventures of the Christians, however, did not terminate with their departure from the shores of their Moslem foes. A terrible storm overtook them off Trapani, which wrecked eighteen of their largest ships and a still greater number of transports, in which many knights and warriors, with an immense store of military equipments, and the whole of the booty obtained at Tunis, were swallowed. At Trapani, Thibaut of Champagne, king of Navarre, brother-in-law to Philippe, and Isabella of Aragon, the new French queen, died—the latter in giving premature birth to a son, who



Passage of Arms under Philippe the Hardi.

survived his mother but a few hours; and the old Troubadour monarch of exhaustion and chagrin, at the many miseries he had sustained and witnessed. When Philippe III. therefore entered his capital on the 22nd of May, 1271, it was with the most melancholy pomp with which sovereign was ever accompanied when he went to take possession of a throne which had devolved upon him without dispute. He was followed by the coffins of his wife and child, of his father, his brother John Tristan, and of the king of Navarre. The funeral rites of these illustrious victims of the cross necessarily delayed, for a time, the festivities of the coronation; and ere the latter were concluded, the corpses of Alphonso of Poitou, the king's uncle, and those of Jane, Alphonso's consort, who outlived her husband but a single day, were mingled with the still fresh remains of their relatives. By each of these deaths the king, personally, and for his posterity, was a considerable gainer. The rich provinces of Auvergne, Poitou, Champagne and Toulouse, fell at once, by right of inheritance, to the crown; and for the first time, the kingdom of France extended from Calais to the Pyrenees, from Brest to the Rhone, and from Bayonne to the Alps. The policy of Philippe Auguste began then, in fact, to be developed by its fruits; and the sceptre was seen to be something more than the mere staff of office borne by the president of a feudal confederacy. It was, perhaps, fortunate for royalty that at this period it was in close alliance with the populace—with the middle class then struggling into being; it must, otherwise, have been compelled to fight its way through obstacles, which, before the lapse of a century, would have given birth to pure democracy, and thus have saved the world from the unnumbered throes and struggles which, from time to time, have since convulsed it, and the issue of which has yet to be decided by a revolution, the character of which will be determined rather by the amount of intelligence which may direct, than by the degree of coercion employed in it. Had Philippe possessed the talents of his father, his grand-father, or his great-grand-father, he might have had the option of being the most despotic prince, or the most beneficent sovereign of his age; but his genius resembled that of Charles of Anjou, and he chose rather to attempt the revival of the somewhat obsolete observances of knight-errantry, than to confine his attention to the concentration of his power, or the consolidation of his government. His intelligence was behind that of his day, and his reign consequently presents little that is of marked interest to mankind at large.

The augmented wealth of the new king was exhibited at his coronation by the increased splendour of the tournaments by which the celebration of that event was accompanied, and these displays of pomp and chivalry were multiplied throughout the realm to an extent never before witnessed. Nor were they always harmless entertainments, in one passage of arms which took place in this reign, Robert de Clermont, a brother of the king, received so severe a blow on his helmet with a heavy mace, that his skull was fractured, and his reason destroyed; while the business of the state, in fact, was neglected or

entrusted to incompetent hands, Minstrels, jugglers, troubadours, and wandering jesters and mirth-makers of all kinds, were welcome to the court of the thoughtless Philippe, who seems to have had no care beyond the enjoyment of the passing moment, and no taste to render even his pleasures tolerable.

The first affair of public import in which the king was engaged, was the reduction to obedience of Count Roger de Foix, the chief of the House of Armagnac, who having quarrelled with his vassal Géraud de Casaubon, refused to submit the dispute to the arbitration of his suzerain, and appealed to arms against the royal authority itself. The whole force of the crown was obliged to be used in this feudal war; but after a stout resistance Roger was overwhelmed by numbers, despoiled for twelve months of his inheritance, and consigned for the same term to prison. This matter terminated, Philippe rushed into a quarrel with the Spaniards concerning the succession to the throne of Navarre. Henry of Champagne, surnamed *le Gros*, the successor of Thibaut II., at the age of twenty-eight had become so immoderately fat and unwieldy, that he was reduced to the necessity of using a machine running on wheels, to support his belly when he was moved from chamber to chamber. In a short time this excessive obesity ended in strangulation, and the sceptre of the glutton king passed to his infant daughter Jane, the issue of his marriage with Blanche of France, the niece of St. Louis, and daughter of Prince Robert Count of Artois. By the will of Henry his widow Blanche was left regent of the kingdom, and it was enjoined that an alliance should be formed for the young queen, with a suitable native of France. This last stipulation proved highly offensive to the Navarrese, who rose in revolt against the regent, and having elected Don Pedro Sancho de Montagu, lieutenant of the realm till Jane should be of age, compelled both mother and daughter to seek refuge at the Court of Philippe the Hardy. Upon this royal flight, the whole of Christian Spain became embroiled in the quarrel. Aragon, Castille and Navarre all declared against the domination and interference of the French; and so embittered were the natives of the different sides of the Pyrenees, that each volunteered the bulk of their substance to instigate and maintain a war from which, whatever might be its result, neither could derive any material advantage, though both were certain to suffer exceedingly in consequence of its ravages. The contribution of the Aragonese was no less than two hundred thousand marks of silver. Philippe however was too sensible of the advantages thrown in his way, to let the opportunity of extending his own influence and the wealth and power of his family escape. The moment the young queen was in his hands, he concerted measures with her mother for obtaining a new throne for his own son Philippe; and a dispensation from the Pope—for the children were related within the prohibited degrees—having sanctioned the project, Philippe (*le Bel*) was affianced to Queen Jane, and thenceforth assumed the style of King of Navarre. Eustace de Beau-

marchais, Seneschal of Toulouse, was forthwith sent to take possession of the royal domain, backed by two large armies, the one commanded by Robert of Artois, the brother of the regent Blanche, and the other by the French king in person, and the war was commenced in earnest. Pampeluna fell, almost, without a struggle into the hands of the French, and was subjected to pillage and rapine of the most revolting description. Besides the ordinary atrocities of plunder and violation, the very tombs were ransacked, and the dead despoiled of their ornaments. The sepulchre of King Henry *le Gros*, was not suffered to remain unmolested. Being covered with gilt copper, the cupidity of the soldiers was awakened, and mistaking it for gold they broke it to pieces, in order to share it among them as valuable booty. The whole country subsequently submitted, with the exception of seven fortresses situated among the mountains, which were enabled to hold out till other affairs diverted the attention of their adversaries, and thus preserved their independence.

The success which attended his invasion of Aragon seems to have prompted the next effort of Philippe, which was directed against Castille, to the throne of which kingdom he sought to elevate one of the two sons of his sister Blanche, the widow of Ferdinand de la Cerda, to the exclusion of the second son of Alphonso X. According to the laws of legitimate succession, there can be no question that the issue of the eldest son should have enjoyed the inheritance of their father; but as Alphonso had survived his heir, and the name of the French was hated throughout Spain, the old king set aside the claims of his grand-children, and declared Don Sancho his successor—an act which was solemnly ratified shortly afterwards by the Cortes of Segovia. The king of France at first merely remonstrated against this injustice; but finding no redress, he at length unfurled the oriflamme, and marched to demand satisfaction at the head of an army. That this expedition did not prove an entire failure was solely owing to the fears of the Castillian monarch, who, being pressed by the Moors on the one side, and the French on the other, consented to settle his differences with the latter by negotiation instead of the sword; and Philippe, wholly destitute of stores and provisions, and incommoded by the heavy rains which had set in, hastened to recross the Pyrenees.

A source of domestic disquietude was about this time opened in the king's own family. Not long after the death of Isabella of Aragon, Philippe had married Mary, a daughter of Henry Duke of Brabant, a woman of considerable beauty and of great talent, who soon acquired complete controul over the mind and actions of her weak husband. She had, however, a dangerous rival to contend against, in the person of one Pierre Labrosse, who from the post of barber and surgeon to Louis IV., had elevated himself to the rank of chamberlain and confidential minister to the new king. The sudden death of Louis, the king's eldest son by his first wife, afforded an opportunity for the barber to exercise his arts of insinuation against Mary.

He suggested, and by the aid of certain "witches and diviners," strove to maintain that the queen had got rid of her step-son by poison, and that it was her intention to destroy his brothers in order to clear the way to the throne for her own offspring. Philippe seems to have believed the allegation, and Mary was put on her trial for the offence, when her brother undertook her defence by duel, and she was acquitted in consequence of the absconding of her accuser. So strong, nevertheless, was still the common rumour and suspicion of the queen's guilt, that the king found it necessary to resort to a famous prophetess of Brabant to resolve the mystery; and her answer being vague and ambiguous, a commission was issued to the bishop of Dol and Arnusset, a Knight Templar, to investigate the matter to the bottom. One of the chief instruments of Labrosse upon this, either stung by remorse for the share he had taken in the plot against the life of Mary, or terrified by the threats of torture held out to him by the royal agents, confessed enough to satisfy the king of his wife's innocence, and to consign the barber-minister to the gibbet.

From this private vexation Philippe turned to a matter more congenial to his mind—the defence of his uncle Charles of Anjou, who, in consequence of his insolent ambition, his oppression of his own subjects, and his haughty meddling with the affairs of all the neighbouring states, had provoked a general feeling of hostility against him among all the princes of Europe. Pope Nicholas III., stung by his pretensions to independent sovereignty, deprived him of the titles of vicar of the Holy Roman Empire and senator of Rome; Pedro of Aragon claimed from him the crown of Sicily in right of his wife, a daughter of Manfred, the last king; and several of the Italian cities expressed their readiness to aid in any movement which should promise to rid them of a tyrant. A formidable confederacy was thus organized beyond the Neapolitan frontiers, and a deadly conspiracy in the heart of the kingdom. The latter produced the memorable massacre which has acquired in history the name of the "Sicilian Vespers." Its object was to massacre every French person—man, woman and child—in the territory. John of Procida was the most active agent of the insurgents. He is said to have obtained from Michael Paleologus, the emperor of Constantinople, a sum of thirty thousand ounces of gold to furnish arms and munitions for the enterprise, and from Pedro of Aragon he got a promise of aid in a large fleet and army. The rising, however, seems at last to have been premature. On Easter-monday in the year 1282, the inhabitants of Palermo, while going on a pilgrimage to the shrine of a neighbouring saint, were startled by the cries of a young damsel—the daughter of Roger de Maitre-Ange, who had been insulted by two of the French officers sent to observe the actions of the crowd, and to see that their devotions were not a mere pretext for a seditious meeting. Revenge for the outrage was instantaneous. The Vesper bell, still sounding for prayers, was the signal for general slaughter; and the death-cry spread with the rapidity of pestilence. All the French upon the

island, with the exception only of two—William de Porcelet and Philippe de Scalambre—were put to death, without regard to sex, age or condition. The number that perished on the occasion is said to have exceeded eight thousand.

King Charles was in Tuscany when the news of this event reached him. He was frantic with rage and amazement, and swore that he would make a terrible example of all the Sicilians for their perfidy and cruelty. He appealed at once for assistance to the court of France, and had a ready response to his call both from the sovereign and the nation, which were thrilled with horror at the untimely fate of so many of their countrymen and countrywomen. The King of Aragon was accused on all sides as the prime mover of the revolt, and, accordingly, against him was the vengeance of the French and their partisans turned. Pope Martin IV., who had been mainly indebted to the intrigues of Charles of Anjou for the tiara, proclaimed a crusade against the Aragonese, issued a bull depriving Pedro of his crown, and made an offer of his forfeited kingdom to Philippe III., for his second son, Charles of Valois, on condition that it should be held as a fief appertaining to the Holy See. Philippe accepted the grant, and while his uncle Charles prepared to march upon Naples, the royal army of France repaired to Toulouse, the rendezvous of such of the crusaders as were to cross the Pyrenees. The skill, energy, and activity of Pedro, however, were more than a match for the superior force and resources of all his enemies. He dispatched Roger di Loria—the ablest naval commander of the age—with a fleet to Sicily, and there, besides capturing or destroying all Charles's vessels, the admiral made prisoner the Prince of Salerno, eldest son of the King of Naples. These reverses, added to an illness under which he had for some time before been labouring, so afflicted the haughty Charles, that he was thrown upon a sick bed at Marseilles, whither he had gone to superintend the equipment of some ships for his nephew, and died in the month of January, 1285—declaring with his last breath that his seizure of the crown of Sicily had not been prompted by any selfish desire, but purely by a wish to serve the interests of the Holy Church!

Philippe meanwhile, anxious to secure Aragon for his young son, having gathered an army of about eighty thousand infantry and twenty thousand horse, marched against the Spaniards, who, unable to make head against such overwhelming numbers in the open country, retired to the mountain defiles and fastnesses of Catalonia, where, supported by swarms of the hardy and half savage natives, they were enabled to defy all attack or surprise. The French did not attempt to force their retreat, but pushed forward by Rousillon and Elna into the plains, and after sacking Figueras, Empurias, and the villages and hamlets of Lampourdan, sat down before Gerona about midsummer. The siege lasted for upwards of two months, during which time disease committed the most frightful ravages among the invaders. Clouds of large flies, which infested the camp incessantly, settled upon the horses, and caused an

infinite number to perish. The putrid carcasses of these animals induced a train of other maladies, which swept away a multitude daily; so that although at length Gerona surrendered, the French, when they obtained the prize, were in no condition to profit by it. Ere the town had been a fortnight in their possession, Philippe found it necessary to issue orders for an immediate retreat; and so feeble was he from the pestilential malaria which had thinned the ranks of his army, that he required to be carried in a litter



through the passes of the Pyrenees towards his own dominions. He thus reached Perpignan, but was unable to proceed farther, and after lying in mortal agony for a day or two, he expired on the 5th of October 1285. Don Pedro, who had followed the retreating foe and obtained much spoil and a large number of prisoners, was now everywhere hailed as the deliverer of his country, and victor over the ambitious French. He did not long survive however to enjoy his triumph, but died on the 11th of November—a brief month after the death of his opponent.

The sceptre, upon the demise of Philippe *le Hardi*, passed into the hands of his eldest surviving son Philippe IV., called, from the beauty of his countenance and his fine figure, *le Bel* (the handsome), then a lad of but seventeen years old. This youth appears to have inherited little of his father's martial ardour or ambition, and although the war was said to be continued by him, it was not prosecuted with any vigour, or at all in such

a way as to indicate either a hope or a desire for conquest. Eventually it was settled upon terms which secured the liberation of the Prince of Salerno, and his establishment as King of Naples, while Sicily, properly so called, was allowed to remain in the hands of the house of Aragon.

It is probable that the apparent apathy of the French king, with regard to the Spanish war, was chiefly attributable to the conduct of Edward I. King of England, who, seeing the attention of his rival distracted by the affairs of the South, seized the occasion to demand possession of Saintonge—a district lying contiguous to Guienne, which still appertained to the English crown. The French king seems, from his subsequent proceedings, to have penetrated the designs of Edward, who, doubtless, wished to recover all that his grandfather had lost on the continent, as well as to complete the Norman conquest of Britain, by the reduction of Wales and of Scotland. Philippe, indeed, could scarcely fail to look with jealousy upon the daily growing power and pretensions of the English sovereign, who, besides having formed alliances with the Counts of Savoy, of Flanders, and of Bar, was believed to have opened a correspondence with several of the feudatories of the interior of France, and by means of rich presents and flattering compliments, to have won them to his views and interests. Saintonge, nevertheless was surrendered to its claimant, as being at that moment untenable by the French; but thenceforward there was no good understanding between the chiefs or people of France and England. They regarded each other as sworn enemies, and took every occasion to evince their mutual hatred and scorn of each other. Even the Normans, connected as they were by ties of blood with the conquerors of the Anglo-Saxons, had forgotten their consanguinity, and took part with the French in their hostility to the subjects of Edward.

The end of this might easily have been foreseen. The first pretext would be seized, on either side, for open war; nor was occasion long wanting to justify an appeal to the sword. Some English and Norman sailors meeting at a watering place in or near Bayonne, a quarrel ensued as to which party should have precedence in filling their casks. An Englishman struck a Norman with his fist, and the latter thereupon drew his knife. The combatants closed with each other, and in the scuffle that followed the Norman was thrown and killed. The comrades of the English sailor saved him from the fury of the Frenchmen, and the authorities of Bayonne, which then belonged to King Edward, refused any redress to those who sought to avenge the slaughtered sailor. The Normans, inflamed with rage, then put to sea, and seizing the first English ship they met with, took from it a merchant of Bayonne, and hanged him at the yard-arm of their vessel with a dog fastened to his feet. Reprisals were made for this outrage, and the sea along the coasts of Guienne and Aquitaine, and even of the West of England, was soon covered with piratical barks, and afforded constant scenes of violence and barbarity. On the one side the mariners of the cinque ports, aided by those

of Flanders, Gascony, and Ireland, seized and hanged all the Normans they could get into their power; and, on the other, the Normans, aided by the French and the Genoese, swept the English channel, and made frequent descents upon the coast, as well of Britain as of Gascony, and carried away immense booty, and a number of the inhabitants. At length so systematic and well-organised had this unauthorised warfare become, that a regular naval battle ensued off Rochelle, in which the Normans, whose vessels amounted to two hundred, were totally defeated, and nearly every man on board was slain.

The king of France was now compelled by the universal voice of his people, uplifted in loud indignation, to interfere in the struggle. He issued a citation to Edward, as a peer of France, to appear during the ensuing festival of Christmas at Paris to answer for the crimes and excesses committed by his subjects against the vassals of his suzerain. Edward, whose own pretended claims upon Wales and Scotland were based upon slavish obedience to the feudal law, did not venture to dispute the legality of this haughty mandate; but, as he could not then attend the court in person, he despatched his brother Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, to negotiate. The matter was apparently settled by the temporary humiliation of the king of England, who by his envoy consented to surrender Gascony for forty days in token of submission and penitence; at the end of which time it was to be freely restored to its legal chief. Philippe, however, having obtained his end, was in no mood to comply with the terms he had himself proposed; but declared when re-possession was demanded from him, that as Edward had not presented himself in person, as became a vassal, his feudal territories were forfeited, and had become annexed to the crown of France. War was now inevitable. Edward renounced all allegiance to Philippe, and having made due preparation for the conflict, and suppressed a new and dangerous revolt of the Welsh, which detained him for some months, and a formidable rising of the Scots, he crossed over to Flanders, in the month of August, 1297, determined to avenge himself for what he called the perfidy of the French. But his embarrassments were too many to permit of effectual operations. William Wallace had arisen among the mountains of Scotland to assert the independence of his native land, and Philippe, by his prompt and active measures, had made himself master not only of Guienne, but of Lille, St. Omer, Bruges, Courtray and Ypres in Flanders, and of Blaye, Bourg, La Réole and Bayonne. His own subjects moreover had begun to grow refractory on account of the incessant taxes imposed on them. The clergy had led the way by refusing to grant the revenues of their benefices, by way of aids; and these being followed by the barons, who refused to quit the country, the king was compelled to listen to terms of accommodation, and after agreeing to a truce for two years, returned, not without some disgrace and humiliation, to England. A definitive treaty of peace was subsequently signed [20th of May, 1303] at the village of Asnières, on the

banks of the Seine near Paris, by which Edward consented to relinquish his alliance with Flanders, and Philippe to abandon the Scots, while Guienne was restored to the English monarch upon his again performing homage for the same, and taking an oath of strict alliance, offensive and defensive, with his recent adversary. This peace was ratified by a double marriage in the families of the two kings. Edward, now a widower, received the hand of Margaret, Philippe's sister; and the Prince of Wales was betrothed to the Princess Isabella, the French sovereign's daughter.

The advantages of this treaty were immediate to both Edward and Philippe. The former was enabled to bring the long war with the Scots to an end, by the capture and murder of Wallace; and the latter found leisure to pursue his designs against Flanders without molestation. Charles of Valois, to whom the conduct of the Flemish expedition was entrusted, at once entered the Netherlands with an overwhelming force, and, having subdued the other chief towns, invested Ghent, which he succeeded in treacherously inducing Guy, the old count, to surrender, on pledging his faith and honour that he should be restored to personal freedom and full dominion on making his submission. No sooner, however, had compliance been extorted, than the veteran, with his daughter, two sons, and many of their principal partisans, were hurried to Paris and thence distributed among the different state prisons of France, in Compiègne, Chinon, and the castles of Auvergne; and Flanders was formally annexed to the territories of Philippe. The Flemings, outraged at being thus stripped of their independence, did not long submit quietly to the new domination thrust upon them by the hated French. Their disposition to revolt was exhibited indeed almost before their yoke had been imposed. The wealthy burgesses, the shopkeepers and artisans, entered into a conspiracy to rid themselves of their conquerors in the same way as the Sicilians had done a few years before. Arms were secretly distributed, and pass-words—unpronounceable by the French—were adopted, by which friends might be distinguished from enemies in the proposed massacre. But before matters were quite ripe for a general rising, a quarrel occurred at Bruges between some tradesmen and the city magistrates; and the latter appealing for support to James of Châtillon—an uncle of the French queen, and Governor of Flanders,—the malcontents, after a desperate fray, were driven out of the city. This delayed the project of vengeance, however, but for a moment. Pierre le Roy, the chief of the insurgents, an aged weaver, of upwards of sixty years old, short in stature and of rude manners, now associated himself with a sort of giant—a butcher of Mâle, named John Breyel, and being pursued by the French, went to Namur, and obtained an interview with a son and great-nephew of the imprisoned Count Guy. These princes entered readily into the feelings of their countrymen, and expressed their determination to liberate their native land, or perish in the attempt. The necessary preliminaries having been here arranged, Le Roy and Breyel returned to Bruges, which they entered in disguise by night; and next day, finding the inhab-

itants engaged in demolishing the fortifications of their own city, the two proscribed men went among them upon the ramparts, and addressing the



crowd, instigated a revolt upon the instant. A simultaneous rising took place at Ghent, and the French authorities were speedily driven from that town as well as from Bruges. The son of the Count of Flanders now put himself at the head of the popular movement; and, before it was known to Philippe that his domination in the low countries had been threatened, he was stripped of all the strong places there, by which alone he could hope to retain his sway.

He immediately despatched Robert of Artois with an army of upwards of seven thousand knights, ten thousand archers, and thirty thousand foot soldiers, to quell the insurrection; and the case of the Flemings, who had nothing to oppose to this formidable array, but the artisans, husbandmen, and boors of their country, seemed hopeless. Animated, however, by a patriotic desire to preserve the independence of their nation, and to secure their personal freedom and native laws, they resolved not to shrink from the encounter, but choosing their position before Courtray, which was threatened with the first attack, they awaited the unequal battle with a fortitude and courage which could not be surpassed. Robert of Artois commenced the conflict [11th July, 1302] by precipitating the whole of his cavalry upon the "rabbits," as he called his opponents, in a single column. On reaching the banks of a canal, however, which covered the Flemish front, being unable to rein their chargers in time, the foremost were hurried over the banks by those

behind ; and irretrievable confusion was thus created ere a blow was struck. The Flemings, seeing the plight of their antagonists, hastened across the canal, and closing upon their flanks and rear, carried consternation and death throughout the field. The victory of the burghers was complete. The French are said to have lost not less than twenty thousand men, including the Count of Artois, the Constable de Nesle, James of Châtillon, the French chancellor, the Duke of Brabant, and a train of upwards of two hundred men distinguished for their high birth or their warlike achievements.

Philippe was in no mood to regard this defeat as decisive ; and, accordingly, after replenishing his exhausted exchequer by some most arbitrary exactions, he gathered an army of nearly eighty thousand men, and proceeded in person to the low countries, to chastise the rebels. The campaign, however, was undertaken at too late a period of the season ; and, after some unimportant skirmishes, a truce was agreed upon, by which the old Count of Flanders recovered his liberty for a few weeks, and the war, though not definitively terminated, thenceforward languished, until the autumn of the year 1304. At this time new vigour was infused into the French proceedings, by the co-operation with the invading army of a considerable fleet, hired from the Genocse, and commanded by Reniero Grimaldi. This force entered the Zuyderzee, and, attacking the vessels of the Flemings, obtained a signal victory ; while Philippe, advancing upon Mons-en-Puelle, after sustaining some inconvenience and loss from a momentary surprise, obtained a triumph, which in its consequences, gave him authorised possession of all the districts of Flanders, within the banks of the Lys, in which the French language was commonly spoken. The rest of the country reverted to the family of Guy, the old Count ; its independence being guaranteed by Philippe.

It is probable that this long struggle would have been still protracted, but



for a general quarrel which had sprung up some time before its close, between the French king and Pope Boniface VIII., concerning the right of

nomination to vacant bishoprics within the dominions of Philippe. The latter on seeing Bernard Saissetti, thrust into the Bishopric of Pamiers by the pontiff's sole authority, caused the Bishop to be arrested by night, and, after subjecting him to various indignities, consigned him to prison on a charge of treason, heresy and blasphemy. Boniface remonstrated against this outrage and violence in a bull known in history, by its opening words "Ausculta, fili," in which he asserted his power "over nations and kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant," and concluded by informing Philippe that he had summoned all the superior clergy of France to an assembly at Rome on the 1st of the following November, in order to deliberate on the remedies for such abuses as those of which the king had been guilty. Philippe, by no means intimidated by this measure, convoked a full and early assembly of the three estates of his kingdom, to decide upon the conduct of him whom the orthodox, up to that time, had been in the habit of deeming infallible. This [10th April 1303], was the first meeting of a Parliament, properly so called, in France. It was held in the church of Nôtre Dame de Paris, in separate chambers—each order deliberating apart, and all being dissolved at the close of a single day. In these assemblages the question at issue between the king and the Pope at once became a national one. The chambers unanimously approved and applauded the conduct of the king, and resolved to maintain the honour of the crown and the nation from foreign insult or domination; and to mark their decision more conclusively, they concurred with the sovereign in prohibiting the clergy from attending the Pope's summons to Rome. The papal bull was burned as publicly as possible—the act being proclaimed with trumpets through the streets of Paris, after having been read and explained to the wondering people. The Pope, alarmed at these novel and bold proceedings, sought instantly to avert their consequences by soothing explanations; but Philippe would not now be turned aside from his course. He summoned a convocation of the Gallican prelates, in which by the mouth of William de Nogaret, his chancellor, he represented the occupier of St. Peter's chair as the father of lies and an evil-doer; and he demanded the seizure of this pseudo-pope, and his imprisonment until he could be brought before a legitimate tribunal to receive the punishment due to his numerous crimes.

Boniface now declared that the French king was excommunicated, and cited him by his confessor to appear in the papal court at Rome within three months, to make submission and atonement for his contumacy. Philippe however caused the bearers of this missive to be waylaid and imprisoned; and published a formal accusation of the Pope, in which that venerable father was charged with the grossest and most absurd crimes. A war of documents ensued, in which the king, the pontiff, the barons, the cardinals, the people and the priesthood all took part, in a manner which certainly threatened to produce a premature dissolution of the unity of the catholic church.

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Pope Boniface insulted by the Condottieri.

While this unseemly quarrel, however, seemed to be growing interminable in its complexities, the daring of a few men opened a shorter path to its end, than could have been anticipated.

William of Nogaret associating to him Sciarra Colonna, a noble Roman, who, having been driven from his native city by Boniface and subjected to various hardships, had found refuge in Paris, passed, with a train of three hundred horsemen, and a much larger body of picked infantry, secretly into Italy, with the intention of surprising the Pope at his summer residence in his native town of Anagni, and repeating upon his person the outrage that had been practised upon the Bishop of Pamiers. Boniface, it was known, had prepared another bull maintaining that "as vicar of Jesus Christ he had power to govern kings with a rod of iron, and to dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel;" and he had appointed the 8th of September 1303, the anniversary of the nativity of the Virgin, for its promulgation. It was so arranged therefore that the attack should be made on the 7th, and according at about seven in the morning of that day, Nogaret and Colonna with their supporters, bearing the banners of France, rushed into Anagni, shouting "Success to the King of France—Death to Pope Boniface!" The papal palace was captured after a feeble resistance, and the cardinals and personal attendants of the Pontiff fled for their lives. Boniface, however, seeing that no means of retreat for himself had been left open, prepared to sustain with becoming dignity the last outrage his enemies could inflict. "Since I am betrayed," he cried, "as my Saviour was betrayed, I will at least die as befits a Pope." He then clothed himself in his official vestments, with the mantle of St. Peter on his shoulders, the crown of Constantine on his head, and the keys and cross in his hands; and seated himself in the pontifical throne. Sciarra Colonna was the first who penetrated to his presence; and he, when he beheld the venerable form and composed bearing of the old man, who had attained his eighty-sixth year, seemed suddenly to relent in his fiercer purpose, and his revenge did not prompt him to more than verbal insult. Nogaret followed, and approaching the Pope with some external shew of respect, informed him that he must at once prepare himself to be present at the council, forthwith to be summoned on the subject of his misconduct. The Pope replied firmly to his captor,—“William of Nogaret, from thee and such as thee—a heretic and the son of a line of heretics, who have atoned for their errors in the flames—I can patiently endure any indignity.”

The Condottieri engaged in this enterprise, then dragged the Pope from his throne, and conveying him into the street, mounted him upon a lean horse without saddle or bridle, with his head to the animal's tail, and thus conducted him in a sort of pilgrimage through the town. He was then consigned prisoner to one of the chambers of his palace and placed under guard; while the body of his captors dispersed themselves through the splendid apartments in eager pursuit of plunder. Three days were thus

occupied; but at the end of that time the aggressors found a resistance they seem never to have calculated upon. The people of Anagni, by whom the pontiff appears to have been beloved, having recovered from the panic of their first surprise, and discovered the weakness of the assailing force, took arms in behalf of their fellow-townsmen and spiritual father, and falling upon the French while still indulging in the licence of the sack, drove Nogaret and Colonna from their quarters, and either expelled or massacred the whole of their followers.

But though they were thus enabled to restore the aged Boniface to freedom, they could not heal his wounded honour. Rendered furious by the disgrace of his captivity, he hastened from Anagni to Rome, breathing vows and threats of vengeance. The violence of his passion, however, speedily overpowered his reason, and he sunk at once into abject imbecility. His eyes were haggard, his mouth white with foam, and he gnashed his teeth in silence. He passed the day without nourishment and the night without repose; and refused to allow any attendant to enter his chamber to offer him food or consolation. After an interval, his domestics burst into his apartment, and there beheld his body stretched on the bed stiff and cold. The staff which he had carried bore the marks of his teeth, and was covered with foam. His white locks were stained with blood—produced probably by some violence of the French soldiers—and his head was so closely wrapped in the counterpane that he was believed to have anticipated his end by violence and suffocation [11th October, 1303].

The scandal of these proceedings throughout Christendom was immense; and Philippe adopted every precaution to avert evil consequences from himself by paying court to Benedict XI. who succeeded to the tiara. This Pope, however, though he for some time temporised, could not be long deaf to the loud voices of the clergy which called for punishment upon the oppressors of the church. Ere he had reigned nine months he found himself compelled to excommunicate the plunderers of Anagni; and a few days afterwards he perished, under circumstances which leave little doubt of his having been poisoned. A veiled lady presented to him while at table, a basket of figs—the earliest produce of the season; and Benedict, after partaking largely of the fruit, sickened and died. Nogaret and Colonna have been generally suspected as the authors of this act; and one author—Ferreus Vicentinus—accuses Philippe himself. But however this may be, the king of France profitted largely by the crime; since, besides gaining time for the subsidence of excitement, he was subsequently enabled, by his intrigues, to procure the election of a person pledged not only to grant him absolution for all past offences, but to stigmatise the memory of Boniface, to restore the deposed Colonna to his honours and estates, to nominate several French ecclesiastics to the college of cardinals, and to grant to the king the tenths of the Gallican church for a term of five years. The pontiff who thus seems to have been the first of his race to lower the pretensions of his office,

was Bertrand de Goth, originally a private gentleman of Bazadors, and subsequently promoted to the Archiepiscopal See of Bordeaux. He assumed the title of Clement V., and after receiving investiture at Lyons, fixed the apostolic residence at Avignon, where it continued, under successive occupants, for a period, the length of which caused it to be denominated by the Italians the Babylonian captivity.

This quarrel settled, Philippe engaged in another undertaking, the safe-conduct of which required all his skill and unscrupulousness. This important enterprise was no less than the destruction and plunder of the military order of Knights Templars. This powerful fraternity had its origin in the year 1118, when nine French crusaders, who had served under Baldwin king of Jerusalem, in the Holy Land, being affected by the hardships constantly besetting poor pilgrims from Europe, took upon themselves a vow of brother-



hood, binding them to devote their lives to the protection of the faithful wending to the Holy Sepulchre. From the house near the temple of Jerusalem in which they first established themselves they received their

distinctive name ; and their services soon rendering them celebrated, numbers of persons of the noblest birth, and natives of every christian country, were soon induced to enrol under their banners. Their subsequent valour in battle, their wisdom in council, and the wealth which they acquired by their conquests, and from the bequests and donations of the pious for a long series of years, rendered them at once the pride and the envy of the world. The rule of their order had been drawn up by St. Bernard, and sanctioned by the Pope and the patriarch of Jerusalem. Each of their number wore a white robe with a red cross upon the breast ; and their duty was to receive and welcome all poor pilgrims, supplying them with needful food and water to wash their feet, and to guide and defend them on their journey to the sacred places they were bound by their vows to visit. While the Christians retained their possessions in Palestine, such an order must necessarily have been exceedingly useful ; but when the Holy Land was abandoned, they lost much of their importance, without at the same time relinquishing any of their arrogance, luxury or high pretension. Their enormous possessions rendered them formidable to the different princes in whose territories they located themselves ; and as they were constantly busy in all the political intrigues and movements of the age, they were every where, as a necessary consequence, by turns flattered, bribed, maligned and hated.

Philippe le Bel is believed to have entertained a hostile feeling against the Templars, for some supposed support which they had afforded or promised to Pope Boniface ; and it is certain, that at the period referred to, his exchequer was empty, while the treasures of the devoted order were full. An opportunity was therefore eagerly watched to despoil them, at the same time, of their influence and their riches. Such an occasion as was desired, presented itself in the year 1307, when the prior of Montfaucon, and one Noffo Dei, a Florentine, who had been condemned by their brethren to expiate certain crimes proved against them, by perpetual imprisonment, gave notice that, if released from confinement, they were willing to make disclosures concerning their order, of a highly criminal nature, and of the utmost importance to the royal authority. They were accordingly liberated, and declared that the secret rules of the order were entirely opposed to the precepts of the Christian religion, and to all decency and morality. The evidence was readily accepted, and communicated to the Pope ; and on the 13th of October William of Nogaret proceeded to the Temple in Paris, and arrested James Molay, the grand master, and about a hundred and forty of his subordinate knights. At the same moment—so carefully had matters been prepared—similar seizures were made in every part of the kingdom ; and next day, the king, who had already taken possession of the Temple, and made it the depository of his treasure-chests, and the muniments of the crown, caused proclamation to be made of all the crimes and misdemeanours of which his victims were accused. This catalogue was of the most frightful kind, and was not the less credulously received, that it comprised offences utterly

revolting to human nature, together with numerous absurdities, contradictions, and even impossibilities. It was alleged that the initiation of a knight was accompanied with impure ceremonies and strange revelations; that the Templars adored some idol, to whom the chronicles of the time have given the name of *Baphumet*; that they rejected the worship of the Saviour, and were accustomed wantonly to desecrate the holiest symbols of his religion; and that they were commonly guilty of pollutions, too vile to be even named. The knights appealed to Pope Clement to investigate the matter, and the Pontiff, on being pressed to do so, proceeded so far in their behalf as to suspend the decision of the secular judges; but, remembering his obligations to Philippe, he soon revoked this act of mercy, and granted a licence for the renewal of the civil processes, on condition that the fate of the Grand Master, and the chief preceptors, should be reserved for his own judgment.

The numerous prisoners awaiting sentence, meanwhile, were treated with the utmost cruelty and injustice. Every one was loaded with chains, and reduced to the most meagre and unpalatable diet; and when it was found that sufficient evidence could not be procured voluntarily to convict the assumed culprits, an inquisition was organised, and empowered to apply the most horrible tortures to extort confession. In Paris alone, thirty-six knights died upon the rack, maintaining their innocence to the last; while others, less able to endure agony, confessed to crimes which our reason convinces us could never have been perpetrated. Even those, however, who were entrapped into criminal admissions under torment, recanted in their dungeons, and nothing remained of trust-worthy testimony, save the unimportant and well known facts, that the Templars were generally addicted to pride, avarice, and licentiousness of various kinds—vices, from which the king was no more exempt, than these his persecuted subjects. As a specimen of the kinds of confession elicited, it may be noticed that Bernard du Gué, one of those who subsequently retracted, exhibited to his judges, while his feet were being exposed to the action of a scorching fire, two bones which had been magically extracted from his heel; and Americ de Villiers, while under excruciating suffering, exclaimed in the presence of his tormentors, that he had personally assisted at the death of our Saviour. Some others admitted that the devil was frequently present and presided at their secret orgies, making his appearance among them at times in the shape of a tom cat.

This persecution lasted for more than four years, when the council of Vienna decreed, and the Pope [on the 22nd March, 1312] confirmed the entire abolition of the order. The extent of misery inflicted by these unnatural proceedings, may be estimated from the fact, that, at Senlis, not less than nine knights were consigned to the flames; and that fifty-four perished together at the stake [12th May, 1310] in Paris—all protesting their innocence of the offences with which they stood accused. “We have the failings of men,” said the sufferers; “but to have been guilty of the wickedness imputed to us, we must have been incarnate fiends.” During the sitting of

the council of Vienna, nine knights, habited in their appropriate vestments, driven to that extremity by despair, made their appearance in the midst of the assembly, and demanded to be heard in behalf of themselves and two thousand of their brethren, who were wandering as outlaws and vagabonds in the recesses of the woods and forests, and among the glens and gorges of the mountains. The appeal, it is unnecessary to add, availed nothing with judges predetermined upon their sentence. The Templars were condemned, and their *specified* property was conferred upon their rivals, the Hospitallers, while the *residue*—by far the greater portion—was abandoned to the disposal of the several princes in whose dominions the forfeited estates and goods had accumulated.

The end of this long and sanguinary tragedy did not arrive till the year 1314, when James Molay, the Grand Master, the Visitor of France, and the Masters of Aquitaine and Normandy, were brought before the Pope and King Philippe in person, to the porch of Nôtre Dame de Paris, to receive sentence for their confessed irreligion and immorality. The bitterness of death, however, had now passed; and both Molay, and Guy of Normandy, when their extorted admissions were read over to them, had the courage to deny their truth, and even their genuineness; and the prisoners, consequently—whom it was before intended to consign to perpetual captivity—were now declared relapsed heretics, and condemned to the flames, to which they were led next day at the hour of vespers—a pile having been erected for them on the Isle of the city of Paris, immediately behind the gardens of the royal palace. Seretti, of Vicenza, relates, that the Grand Master, while the blaze was kindling around his limbs, prophetically cited his two oppressors to appear with him before the judgment seat of the Almighty—Clement within forty days, and Philippe within a year and a day from the hour of his execution. It is probable, however, that this remarkable prediction, like many others, was never heard of till after its fulfilment.

The last year of the life of Philippe le Bel was embittered by domestic misfortunes. His Queen, Jane, was secretly poisoned; and the wives of his three sons Louis, Philippe and Charles, were all at the same time accused of adultery. It was to these princesses, Blanche, Jane and Margaret, all richly endowed daughters of the House of Burgundy, that the terrible tradition of the Tower of Nesle attaches, which relates that the paramours of the ladies, admitted to visit them at night, were regularly hurled into the Seine next morning. Jane, who had brought Franche-Comte as a dowry to Philippe, was, upon the application of her husband—"more happy, or more wise than his brothers"—declared by the Parliament of Paris to be untainted, and was thereupon restored to her dignities and possessions; while Blanche and Margaret being convicted upon undisputed testimony, added to the confession of two of their lovers, were degraded from their rank, stripped of their inheritance, and sentenced to atone for their crimes by imprisonment for life in the fortress of Chateau-Gaillard. The brothers, Philippe and Walter



Execution of James Molay, Grand Master of the Templars.

D'Aulnay, two youthful Norman knights, the accomplices of the princesses, were consigned to the most grievous tortures—being publicly flayed alive on the place of the martyrdom of St. Gervais, and then beheaded.

The public discontent during these proceedings had, by a variety of circumstances, been excited throughout the realm. Among the number of exactions, the coin had been debased to meet the exigencies of the state, and this obstructing the operations of commerce, and inflicting wrongs to a greater or less extent upon all classes, every one loudly complained of injustice, robbery and oppression, and in the end several tumults occurred, in which the residence of the king himself was attacked, and the whole population were with difficulty restrained from insurrection. In Burgundy, Champagne, Artois and Forez, indeed, the nobles, and burgess class having for the first time made common cause of their grievances, spoke openly of revolt against the royal authority, unless the administration should be reformed, and equity be substituted in the king's courts for the frauds, extortions and malversations, which prevailed. The sudden death of Philippe—owing to a fall from his horse while hunting the wild boar in the forest of Fontainebleau—on the 29th of November, 1314, delivered the people from their tyrant, and the crown from the consequences of a general rebellion. Pope Clement, the king's firm friend, had gone to his last account on the 20th of the preceding April.

Louis X. *le Hutin* (the Quarrelsome) ascended the throne at the mature age of twenty-five. In consequence of the exhausted state of the national finances at his accession, the new sovereign was compelled to issue a commission to his uncle Charles of Valois, and to some other officers, to visit the disaffected provinces, for the purpose of enquiring into and redressing the grievances, before he could raise sufficient supplies to venture upon the necessary expenditure for his coronation. This investigation, it may be added, was highly necessary for other reasons than tax-collecting. The tumultuous spirit which had marked the latter days of Philippe's reign, was still threatening on every side. The peasants of Sens, already in arms, had elected among themselves a king, a pope, and a number of cardinals, in derision as well of the church as of the crown; and when questioned as to their wishes, they demanded charters, similar in substance to the *great charter* of England, and a return to the ancient standard of value in the coin of the realm. The nobles, on their part, required restitution of such feudal rights as they had been deprived of, and the punishment of those who had been the instruments of the late monarch in his acts of oppression. Charles of Valois, who had few scruples that stood in the way of his interest or ambition, readily promised all that was required; and in order that the thirst of freedom which had arisen might not pass altogether unprofitably, he voluntarily offered to sell deeds and charters of the emancipation to all, within the royal domains, who might desire, and be willing to pay for them. Many embraced the offer with alacrity; and thus procured

personal liberty to themselves and their descendants, and afforded a seasonable supply to the royal exchequer. For the rest, the supposed authors of the royal exactions under Philippe le Bel were abandoned without the slightest remorse to the vengeance of their accusers. Pierre de Latilly, the chancellor, was arrested and thrown into prison, and Raoul de Presle, the advocate general, besides being consigned to the dungeons of St. Genevieve at Paris, was subjected to the torturing processes which he had so often been called upon to prescribe for others. William of Nogaret escaped persecution, as he had died before his master. But of all who were now brought to trial, none were pursued with such malignity as Enguerrand le Portier, surnamed de Marigny, a Norman gentleman who stood high in favour with the deceased king, and had enjoyed under him such power and influence as induced the continuator of the chronicle of William of Nangis, to call him a "mayor of the palace," and "coadjutor" of his sovereign. This person having been interrogated by Charles himself as to the treasures of the late king, upon which he was suspected of having peculated largely, replied somewhat haughtily that the count "should have a good account of them." "Give it me then, instantly," exclaimed the enraged prince. "Since you thus press me to speak," answered Marigny, "I have given you half your brother's treasures, and the rest I have employed in liquidating the late king's debts."—"You lie," said the detected Charles. "You lie, in your teeth!" retorted the undaunted treasurer. This firm and courageous bearing was treasured in the memory of the count for after vengeance. A short time only was suffered to elapse before Marigny was seized by two sergeants at arms at the door of the hotel of the Fosses St. Germain, and after being dragged before the council, he was committed prisoner to the tower of the Louvre, whence he was shortly afterwards removed to the Temple, and thence taken for trial to Vincennes.

The king, who had none of the personal animosity of his uncle against the deposed treasurer, of whose dishonesty no evidence could be procured, wished to send Enguerrand to Cyprus, to take the cross in the ranks of St. John, in lieu of other punishment; but this failed to satisfy the vindictive Charles, who in order more effectually to destroy his victim, at length produced against him a set of new charges, which he well knew must prove fatal to him as they required no proof to substantiate them, and admitted of no refutation. The wife and sister of the disgraced minister were included in an accusation of sorcery; and brought to trial with Marigny for having framed waxen images of the late king and his relatives, and after piercing them to the heart with pins, melted them before a slow fire, in order, as the effigies wasted, to ensure the wasting of the bodies of the originals. The magician, James Delor, by whose aid these marvels were alleged to have been wrought, was so terrified at the charge against him, that he hanged himself in his cell. His wife and one of his servants were thereupon burned alive; and the wife and sister of Enguerrand were condemned to close

confinement for life. For the minister himself, a cruel and ignominious death was decreed. He was conducted [April 30th, 1315] in the habit of a convict, and with a taper of yellow wax in his hand, to the gibbet of Mont-



faucon, which he had himself, it is said, caused to be set up, and there, notwithstanding his ancient and illustrious descent, was hanged by the neck. The immense crowd which attended to witness this judicial murder, was expected probably to hail the misfortunes of the unhappy sufferer with expressions of delight and satisfaction, as that of one who had formerly been their plunderer and oppressor; but the people—as keen and competent to judge of motives as their superiors—saw that the death of Marigny was a sacrifice, and not a punishment, and, instead of rejoicing at his downfall, they followed him with pity and with tears. The body was afterwards left suspended in chains for two years among the relics of robbers and malefactors, and it was only after repeated petitions from the widow and family of the murdered man, that the body was allowed to be taken down and interred. Louis seems subsequently to have been stung with remorse for the part he had taken in the treatment of his father's friend, and at his death bequeathed the sum of ten thousand livres by way of atonement to the offspring of his victim. Even Charles of Valois, when, after several years, he lay in mortal agony, repented of the injustice he had perpetrated, and restored to the family of Marigny their confiscated estate, and was at great cost to have a funeral service performed for the murdered man. About the same time, Queen Margaret, who had been condemned on account of her conduct in the tower of Nesle, was privately strangled with a napkin in a prison, without any judicial process, in order to remove all obstacles to a marriage, shortly

afterwards celebrated between Louis and Clemence of Hungary—a Neapolitan princess—the daughter of Charles, surnamed *Martel*. The long delayed ceremony of the royal coronation was performed immediately after these nuptials—August 15th—but with far less of pomp than had attended any similar celebration for upwards of two centuries.

Preparations were now made with as much activity as the exhaustion of the national finances would permit, for a renewal of the war with Flanders, which, having taken advantage of the discontents which had been recently rife throughout France, had sought to establish its independence. The season, however, was too far advanced to allow of effectual operations, and after a futile attempt, in which the troops sustained much sickness and death, the army was obliged to be withdrawn without having encountered a single enemy. This disaster was followed by a dreadful famine, which pervaded the whole of Europe; and distress produced its usual train of disorders, outrage, murder, rapine, and waste. Wild fanaticism completed the horrors of the time. The people, supposing that they were afflicted for their sins, sought to propitiate heaven by the strangest exhibitions of penitence. Multitudes of both sexes, headed by the clergy bearing sacred reliques, went in procession through the streets to the churches and cathedrals completely naked; and, finding these acts of indecency unavailing, they betook themselves to the pillage and destruction of the shops and warehouses of the bakers and corn-dealers—thereby, instead of mitigating the general calamity, materially increasing it. During this and the succeeding year, [1316], the historian Villani computes, that a full third of the whole population of Northern Europe perished of hunger and various maladies, engendered through want of proper sustenance.

Louis the Tenth did not live to see the end of these troubles. Having violently heated himself while playing at tennis, in the wood of Vincennes, he was imprudent enough to enter a cold damp grotto, and indulge in a copious draught of new wine. The sudden change of temperature thus produced in his blood produced fever, which, in a few days, terminated in death—June the 5th, 1316—after a reign of but eighteen months. He left a daughter—Jane—by his first marriage; and it was immediately announced by his widow, Clemence, that she was pregnant. A regency was consequently appointed for the government of the kingdom—the conditions of which were that, if Clemence should bear a son, Philippe, Count of Poitiers, should be regent till the king should attain his nineteenth year, but otherwise, the count was to renounce Navarre and Champagne to the daughters of his brother, Louis Hutin, who, on their part, were to relinquish all claim or pretension to the throne of France, in favour of their uncle Philippe. This arrangement was readily acquiesced in at the time; but at the end of five months, Clemence gave birth to a son, who died a few days afterwards, and when Philippe V., surnamed the Tall, (*le Long*) assumed the title of king in his own right, the question was first mooted whether the Salic law—which

excluded the inheritance of females—had not been virtually repeated by the feudal institutions which had permitted such fiefs as Burgundy, Britany, Aquitaine, and Champagne to pass “from the sword to the distaff” without dispute. Eudes of Burgundy, Charles of Valois, and a considerable party of the nobles, declared in favour of the succession of Jane of Burgundy, and thus created some embarrassment to the new king at the very outset of his reign; but the matter having been referred to the peers of France, that assembly declared that the law by which females were excluded from the throne was inviolable, and that, consequently, Philippe was a legitimate sovereign. The Duke of Burgundy, James’s uncle, for a consideration, acquiesced in this decision; but the old Count of Valois was so strongly opposed to the accession of his nephew, that he refused to assist at the coronation, and even quitted Rheims on the morning of its celebration, to avoid sanctioning it even by his presence in the city where it was performed.

The history of the reign of Philippe the tall, offers few events of stirring interest, as connected with the national administration. The king, indeed, seems to have had little ambition, and less energy. He was satisfied with wearing his crown in ease, and with amassing treasure in his coffers, the want of which, he had the sagacity to perceive, had been the bane of his father and brother. His early acts, however, were not impolitic. He bestowed his four daughters—to whom he gave large apannages—in marriage on as many of the great feudatories of the kingdom, and thus secured their friendship and support; he renewed the league with Scotland, which had been interrupted through the intrigues of Edward I. of England; and he induced Edward II., who was his brother-in-law, to renew his homage in person as a vassal for Aquitaine and Guienne.

The peace which prevailed from 1316 to 1320, appears to have been irksome to the nobility, whose old chivalrous habits still clung to them, though their means, through the waste of the crusade, had been incalculably curtailed. The restlessness excited by a change which was felt to be in progress, but of which no satisfactory end had yet become perceptible, was diffused, indeed, through all the elements of society; and wild insane movements, almost without an object, were continually springing out of the unintelligible agitation. After much confusion—which had no result—the popular frenzy was directed by two priests; who took up the old revelation of the Hungarian Impostor, and preached to the people that Heaven was angry to see the Holy Land still in possession of the Infidels, while its deliverance, though not vouchsafed to the rich and high-born, might easily be accomplished by the poor and lowly. The notion sped like a war-cry throughout France; and the peasantry over the whole land, abandoning their fields and flocks, thronged to the standard of this new crusade, and commenced a wandering and vagabond life, which could not but end in violence and devastation. Thousands, without any means of sustenance, congregated at various points, and finding no aid from the authorities, betook

themselves to plunder, to stave off the horrors of starvation. One division of them, having heard that several of their comrades had been consigned to imprisonment for their depredations at Paris, marched upon that city, where they forced open the prisons, and defied the magistrates and the military. So formidable was their array, that, when they mustered in the Pré-aux-Clercs, and offered battle to their opponents, it was thought prudent to permit them to retire without the least molestation. They retreated southwards, pillaging the country in their way, and when they reached Languedoc, numbered not less than forty thousand men. The Jews were especial objects of their barbarous vengeance. More than five hundred of that persecuted people, having sought protection in the royal castle of Verdun on the Garonne, were so sorely pressed there by fire and sword, that, seeing the keep could not long shelter, they threw their children from the top of the tower, and then directed their swords against each other till every one of the refugees was slain.

The Pope—John XXII.—who resided at Avignon, became alarmed at the approach of this undisciplined rabble, and though he had not previously deigned to notice the “Crusade” as it was called, he now issued a bull of excommunication against all who should take part in the enterprise, until it had obtained the sanction of the church; and, in order to intimidate the refractory more effectually, he summoned the militia of the surrounding country to protect his person and enforce his behests. The peasants nevertheless still pressed onward towards Aigues-Mortes, whence they desired to embark for Palestine; but they there found an enemy more formidable than any they had yet encountered. The Seneschal of Carcassone, with the armed vassals of the district, were so posted, that both the onward march of the fanatics, and their inland retreat, were at once cut off, and they found themselves hemmed in among the marshes, where for the most part they perished miserably of hunger and malaria; while those who escaped death from these causes, were delivered to the executioner, and hung upon trees by the road side, where they were left to be devoured by the flies and by birds of prey.

The suppression of this wild expedition, did not exterminate the spirit which had given birth to it. In the following year, [1321], a rumour having been diffused throughout Europe, that those who were afflicted with leprosy, a disease which had been brought from the East, by the crusaders, and which had spread among all classes of society, through neglect, and want of cleanliness,—had conspired to inoculate all their fellow-creatures with their loathsome malady. They had resolved, it was affirmed, to poison all the rivers, wells and fountains, and to resort to magical incantations and spells to effect their diabolical ends. The Moors and the Jews were denounced as the original authors of this “enormous plot”—designed to accomplish the total ruin of christianity—but being unable to overcome the many obstacles opposed to their own agency in the business, the lepers had

been bribed to perpetrate the crime in their behalf. The evidences adduced to prove the truth of this conspiracy are somewhat curious. At a town in Poitou a bundle of rags, which had been dropped by a leper, was exhibited,



containing the head of an adder, a toad's feet, and some female hair, steeped in a black and foetid liquor: while in other places preparations were said to have been discovered compounded of human blood, wine, and three sorts of noisome herbs, mixed with the consecrated host, all dried and powdered—which formed together an incombustible substance and most virulent poison. Some letters also, written in Arabic by the kings of Tunis and Grenada, to a Jew named Sampson, were brought to light, which disclosed the whole machinations of the criminals; and, in order that the meditated plunder of the Hebrew merchants, and the destruction of the impotent lazars—who besides possessing much wealth—the donations of the pious to their hospitals—at this time of famine assisted to consume the general stock of provisions—might not be deferred for lack of testimony, a number of confessions were extorted by torture from persons accused of participation in the atrocious design. The people, it need scarcely be remarked, after the evidence afforded by the crusade of peasants, were prepared to believe anything that was propounded to them; and the king, whether he believed or not, was needy and avaricious. A project of persecution therefore was

readily agreed to on all hands ; and a horrible massacre of the accused was the result. At Chinon, one hundred and sixty Jews were burned alive at one time on the same pile, constructed in a large hole dug for the occasion, without respect to sex or age, and it appears without even the form of a previous trial or examination. The unfortunate sufferers precipitated themselves into the flames ; husbands urging onward their wives, and mothers throwing upon the blazing faggots their infants, in order that they might escape the pollutions of baptism, which they dreaded even worse than death. At Vitry, forty prisoners of the same race, urged by despair, deliberately chose two of their number—a young woman and an old man—to become the executioners of all the rest. This perpetrated, the aged Israelite prevailed upon his companion to put him also to death, and lastly the heroine threw herself from the castle wall. Partly sustained by her garments however, she merely broke her thigh-bone by the fall ; and having confessed what she had done, she was hurried away, and cast alive into the flames which had been prepared for her and her thirty-nine friends. Of the whole number that thus perished no record has been preserved ; but it is related that, from those who escaped death—of the Jews alone—not less than one hundred and fifty thousand livres were exacted for permission to depart the country. The plunder and destruction of the lepers, there is reason to believe was not less extensive or less savage, than that of their partners in misery.

This cruel and most absurd proceeding, to which was added in augmentation of the national confusion, a futile, because premature attempt, to introduce uniformity in all weights, measure and coin throughout the kingdom,—was still unfinished when Philippe himself was seized with fever and dysentery, of which, after languishing from August 1321, he died on the 3rd of January 1322, after a reign of little more than five years, and in the thirty-fifth year of his reign.

Charles IV. (le Bel) succeeded to the throne on the demise of his brother ; the latter having left no other issue than his daughters, who, like the children of Louis *Hutin*, were excluded from the crown by the Salic law. Warned by the fate of his two brothers, the first care of the new king was to provide for the perpetuation of his own line, by providing himself with a wife in the room of Blanche, Countess of La Marche, one of the adulteresses of the Tower of Nesle. He did not, like his elder brother, resort to the violent measure of strangling his guilty partner, but having discovered that Matilda, Countess of Artois, her mother, had been his own godmother, he set up this relationship in order to sue for a divorce in the Papal court. The complaisant Pontiff (John XXII.) readily admitted the validity of the plea ; and annulled the marriage ; and while the discarded Blanche retired to hide her shame in the garb of a nun in the abbey of Maubuisson, her husband led to the altar Margaret, a daughter of Henry of Luxembourg, late Emperor of Germany, and sister of John, King of Bohemia.

It was fortunate for the Jews and the lepers that the royal exchequer had been in some measure replenished during the preceding reign. The persecution might otherwise have continued under the new king with unabated vigour. As it was, several acts of grace were published, under which the unhappy survivors of the massacre were allowed to quit their prisons in the day time, to seek from their debtors the means of paying their ransom, and of going into distant exile. The lazar houses too, which had escaped demolition, were permitted to be appropriated to their original uses, and their accruing revenues were spared for their future maintenance—perhaps in the hope that they would again accumulate for future seizure. The turbulence of the populace meanwhile, found a new channel in the preaching of a crusade against the Turks, who had recently overrun Armenia. The king entered into this project with eagerness, and readily obtained from the clergy a grant of the tenth of their revenues, to carry it into execution; but the money once collected the regal ardour subsided, and fresh occupation was found for those who sighed for the excitement and the spoils of war nearer home.

One Jourdain de Lille, the Lord of Casaubon, having married the niece of the Pope, and been thus swollen with inordinate pride and importance, scourged the whole of Aquitaine with brigandage and disorder. He had already been eighteen times cited to answer for his misconduct before the court of France, and at the eighteenth summons he had seized the king's pursuivant, and with his own mace dashed out the man's brains, for daring to serve a writ upon so exalted a personage. The king, upon this, at once despatched an efficient force against the miscreant, and after his lands had been wasted, he was captured and conveyed to Paris. The court of peers, notwithstanding the intercession of a crowd of counts and barons, who hoped probably to gain favour with the Pope by befriending his nephew, condemned the culprit to expiate his crimes upon the gibbet; and he was accordingly dragged at the tails of horses to Montfaucon [21st May, 1323] and there hanged in chains. Another of the Southern nobles—none of whom seem as yet to have been cordially reconciled to the French yoke—about this time unfurled his banner against the authority of Charles le Bel. This was the seigneur of Montpezat, a vassal of the English crown, who laying claim to some property in Agénois, built a petty castle (bastille) at St. Cerdas, on land which was alleged to be part of the royal domain of France. The king's seneschal attacked, and took the fortress, but the sieur de Montpezat, having obtained the aid of the English seneschal of Guienne, returned to the encounter, and recovering possession of his stronghold, hung up three French knights whom he captured there. The king now sent his uncle, Charles of Valois, to Guienne, in order to put an end to this, and the many other disorders which agitated the Province. The army of this stern old warrior was every where victorious, and the whole of Aquitaine, with the exception of Bordeaux, Bayonne and St. Sever, was speedily overrun and reduced. Montpezat is said to have died of grief for the misfortunes which he had

brought upon himself and his country ; and the English king, Edward II., unable at that time to offer any armed resistance to the inroads of the French, was compelled to commit to his faithless queen, who was the sister of Charles, the negotiations for obtaining restitution of the dominions of which he had been deprived. Isabella accordingly repaired to Paris, and concluded a treaty with her brother, by which her husband consented to confer Ponthieu and Guienne upon his son Edward, Prince of Wales—afterwards Edward III.—and to redress the many and grievous wrongs which had been inflicted upon his queen through the instrumentality of Hugh le Despenser—against whom not only the consort of the sovereign, but more than half the nobles and people of England, were then banded in open revolt.

Charles himself, when the South was pacified, made a stately progress thither in order to receive the homage of his subjects ; and he held his court with unusual pomp at Toulouse. During his brief residence there, the citizens attempted a revival of the already almost absolute Provençal poetry. They invited minstrel candidates to what were designated *Floral Games*, to be held on the 1st of May, when the successful competitor was to be graduated as *Doctor in the Guie Science*, and was to receive a golden violet from the seven Troubadours appointed to adjudge the prize. The king seems to have had little relish for this kind of contest ; for just as preparations were being made for the festival, he suddenly broke up his court and returned to his capital. The Floral games, nevertheless, were held ; and out of them sprung the Academy of Flora, which subsequently received the name of the College of Rhetoric, an institution which continued to summon all the poets of Provence to its anniversary, till, after the lapse of nearly five centuries, it was overthrown among other inanities, by the volcanic eruption of the Revolution of 1790. Before Charles had reached Paris, his queen, Margaret, had the misfortune to be overturned in her chariot, an accident which occasioned the premature birth of a son, and the almost immediate death of both the infant and his mother. This was a heavy calamity, as the king had still no male issue, but he sought to repair it by a marriage, contracted within three months, with Jane, the daughter of Louis, Count D' Evreux, his cousin-german—a relationship of which the difficulties were obviated by the convenient dispensation of the Pope—who, when so disposed, had power to make every bar, erected by consanguinity or creed, bend to political or financial exigency. This marriage, however, like the two former, brought nothing but disappointment ; as Jane, though she had outlived her lord for many years, brought nothing to his nuptial bed but daughters.

About the same period, Count Louis of Rhetel, who had wedded the princess Margaret of France, daughter of Philippe the Tall, appealed to Charles concerning his right of inheritance to the province of Flanders, which had been seized by Robert of Cassel, Louis' eldest brother, contrary to the conditions which had been made on his marriage, by his grandfather,

Count Robert. The French king having obtained the assent of the count of Cassel to his interference, decided the cause in favour of his nephew, who having done homage for the province as a fief of France, forthwith took possession of his government. This necessarily gave to the king that ascendancy in the affairs of the Low Countries, which his predecessors had vainly endeavoured to obtain by the sword; and brought, moreover, what at that moment was equally valuable, a large sum of money to the royal exchequer. The Flemings, however, ever jealous of the intervention of their neighbours, could but ill brook to receive a sovereign at their hands, though Louis is reported to have been originally much more popular among them than his brother; and when the prince sought to impose upon them some needful taxes to recruit his own treasury, they at once rose in revolt, seized and imprisoned him at Bruges, and invited his brother Robert with almost unanimous voice to assume the administration of affairs, and thus put an end to French domination and influence. Charles le Bel at first contented himself with remonstrating against this rebellious and unnatural conduct; but finding that a deaf ear was turned to his counsel by the refractory burghers, he made ready an army and prepared to invade the territory, as Lord Paramount, and reinstate his vassal and nephew in power by force. This practical threat produced the desired effect. The people having forgotten their victories of old, or lacking leaders of sufficient skill and courage, tendered their submission, and on being reminded that their obstinacy had occasioned much wasteful expenditure, they consented to the payment of two hundred thousand *livres tournois*, as an atonement for their errors.

The affairs of England had now become so perplexed, that Charles, in behalf of his sister Isabella, found it absolutely necessary to interfere. The disgraceful affections of Edward II., first for Piers Gaveston, a Gascon youth, and subsequently for Hugh Despenser, an Anglo-Norman, had disgusted no less the high-spirited and chivalrous barons of England, than the young and handsome queen. The latter, taking with her Prince Edward, her son, had, some time before, gone, in the character of ambassadress, to the court of her brother; and, finding from experience, that neither remonstrance nor entreaties would prevail on her husband to abandon his unworthy favourite, she refused to return to London; alleging as her excuse that "such discord had been sown between her and Edward that the king would no longer see her, nor come to the place where she was." To Charles it did not appear that the queen had sufficient grounds to justify the complaint she preferred; and he sent her away, charging her to treat her lord with greater respect than she had hitherto done, in order to gain his affection by modesty and submission. How little she profited from his council, her subsequent career with Mortimer, and the tragical death of Edward II., too distinctly prove; but those incidents we pass over, as belonging to English history.

Charles reigned six years and one month. He died at Vincennes on February 1st, 1328. He left no son to succeed him. Charles de Valois, in

December, 1325, rejoined his brother and his nephews in the vaults of St. Denis, and in consequence, the crown became the inheritance of Philippe, his son.

Many circumstances, during the period embraced in this chapter, mark the progress of social improvement. Though tyrannical priests held the unlettered crowd in awe, and compelled blind obedience to mandates often as harsh and impious as they were absurd; and though it would be too much to expect great refinement could be witnessed in common life, it is still plain that the darkness and confusion formerly profound and universal, had given way before the dawn of modern civilised life. Some important amelioration was effected. Amidst the storms which prevailed, the people awoke to a sense of their power, and in some instances proved that they understood how it could be most efficiently exercised. The feudal barons found their controul successfully resisted; and an influential body rose in the state superior to them. The burghers, or inhabitants of cities, began to enjoy a degree of consideration till then unknown. Before the time of Louis *le Gros*, these, from their supposed wealth and unwarlike habits, were next to the Jews, the favourite objects of attack with the barons and their followers. The common danger taught them to combine their means to found corporations to elect magistrates, and thus form a powerful bond of union. In fact, something like the importance of citizenship was already gained, and the dwellers in towns no longer remained at the mercy of their neighbours of the country.

The useful arts advanced. The preparations made for the crusades, which caused a great demand for industry, must have operated as a bounty on mechanical ingenuity. The crusaders, in the distant parts which they visited, acquired knowledge which, on their return, proved more valuable to their several countries than all the conquests they had made. Medical skill was thought to have been increased in a remarkable degree, by experience gained of numerous drugs of healing virtue brought from Asia, many of which have retained their fame, to the present time.

Religion, which ought to promote "peace on earth," it has been seen, as then understood, was too frequently the source of fatal discord and mournful persecution. The popes claimed unlimited power over kings, and their states, and sometimes exercised it in a way that proved their authority was more than imaginary. Christians were excited against each other, but more frequently against the Jews, who, few in numbers, could seldom repel the violence of those whom their reputed wealth attracted to despoil them.

Literature silently made its way, and as men learned more deeply to reflect, became gradually more important than it had hitherto been. Here again the effects of the crusaders were beneficially felt. They accelerated the introduction of Arabian histories into Europe. The writers of Spain and Italy began to be admired in France and England. In the last named country Boccaccio became a favorite. The cause of letters was greatly served by the Jews. Here it would seem their industry was not restrained, nor their

services despised. Authorship was perhaps not profitable. Moses Ben Maimon, the friend of Abenezza, was nobly distinguished at the close of the twelfth century, as was David Kimki, the celebrated grammarian, and his father, Joseph Kimki, the poet. A little later, Isaac Ben Said, under the patronage of Alonzo the Wise, formed the Alfonsine tables, and Aubonet Abraham produced his *Bechinad Holam*; (examination of the world described by Buxtorf, to be "*Liber insignis, tam quoad res, quam quoad verba. Agit de vanitate mundi contemnenda, et quærendo regno dei.*") Notwithstanding this high character, Abraham did not disdain to occupy part of his time by writing in praise of the game of chess. Some of his productions were singularly fanciful. The author who would fain teach his fellow men to despise the vanities of life, and only to seek the kingdom of God, could indulge in the poor conceit of composing a poem, in which every word began with the letter M; and another in which every verse formed an anagram on his own name.

The adventures of many individuals, who took a part in the wars which desolated the East, were so extraordinary, that those who were in a condition to patronise reading at all, sought for such narratives with great eagerness. They indeed promised everything that could gratify rational curiosity in men who coveted knowledge, or interest those who sought only for amusement, comprehending, as they did, accounts of sacred places, descriptions of unknown nations, details of martial exploits, and animated episodes of love. In or about 1187, Moses Petachia journeyed from Poland to Tartary, and thence to Jerusalem; and, about the same time, Benjamin Ben Jona, or, as he is frequently called, Benjamin of Tudela, a student of Cordova, wrote his travels, which carried him by the way of Constantinople through Antioch to Jerusalem; thence to Tadmor and the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris; and subsequently through Persia. In the thirteenth century, Vincentius Belovacensis became known as the author of *Bibliotheca Mundi*, and Roger Bacon, in his *Opus Majus*, gave what was judged a very accurate account of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and pointed to the possible existence of another vast continent to the west, which, two centuries afterwards, was discovered. Many ecclesiastics of various countries occupied themselves in the same way. A Westphalian monk, named Broccardus, visited Palestine in 1222, and failed not on his return to gratify his friends with the details of what he had seen, under the title of *Descriptio Terra Sanctæ*; and in 1254, Ascelin, a Dominican, gave to the reading world a report of a mission, on which he had been sent by Pope Innocent IV. to the Cham of Tartary. Many other pious and learned men went through a similar task, and their success led, in the fulness of time, to the expedition of Marco Polo, and that of our own distinguished countryman, Sir John Mandeville, in 1322.

Stormy as the times were, some encouragement appears to have been given to poetry in the Floral games, but

"The muses still with freedom sound"

though they might occasionally emit a spark of celestial fire, could but feebly

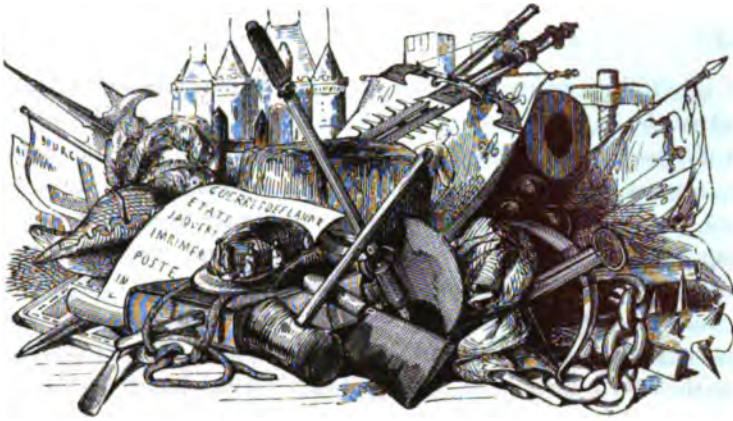
strive against the general gloom which too often prevailed, while frantic struggles against oppression, and between all the great powers of the state, were in progress, and new catastrophes were presented each succeeding day, by the tempests of war or the triumphs of superstition. These, indeed, in happier moments, furnished the poet's theme; and there were intervals when the songs of the minstrels and troubadours, and those lays which recalled past dangers, narrow escapes and glorious victories, were breathed with enthusiasm, received with transport, and treasured for the benefit of posterity.

The fine arts were not neglected by the monks. They encouraged the votaries of Heaven, who had talent to evince their piety, by producing something that would have value on earth. Missals were superbly illustrated, and years were occupied in furnishing the exquisite embellishments with which many of them were enriched. The blooming beauties of the day, were induced to allow their features to be elaborately copied in the representations of the Virgin Mary, which graced the convent chapel. No costly material, and no extent of labour were spared, when a work of art was to be produced for such an object, and some which have escaped the lapse of ages, successive generations have united to admire.

The drama too may almost be said to have been born of religion. On grand occasions mysteries or moralities were acted, in which some of the most striking scenes of scripture were represented, and the Creator and Redeemer of mankind were brought on the scene by histrionic representations, as kings and heroes of antiquity are now. Such performances were deemed in no respect irreverent, but, on the contrary, were thought to honour the faith they intended to illustrate.

It cannot here be maintained that the fierce vindictive temper, manifested in former times, had been subdued by the progress society had as yet made. The tortures inflicted on the Jews, and the execrable cruelty used towards the Knights Templars, give mournful proofs of the barbarous spirit of the age. Unhappily, however, we may descend much lower towards the nineteenth century, and find the same savage feelings displayed by eminent individuals, whose station and education, it might have been hoped, would have taught them better. Such outrages, perhaps, ought in many instances to be ascribed to the individuals who perpetrated them, rather than to the age in which they lived, or the creed which they professed to advocate.

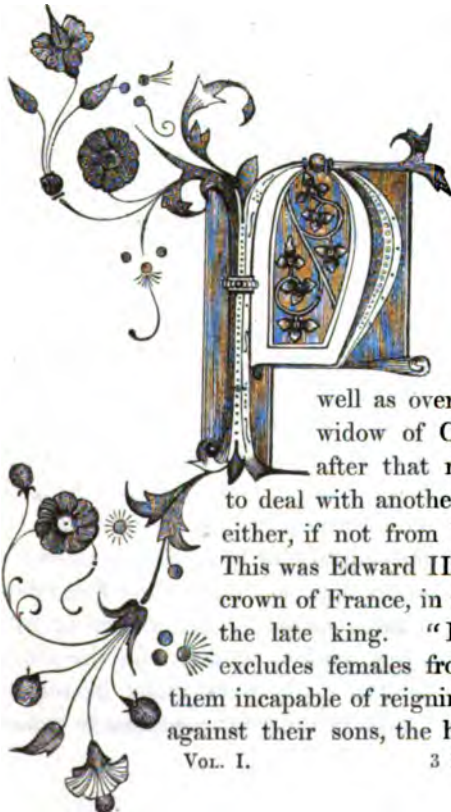




CHAPTER V.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF PHILIPPE DE VALOIS TO THAT OF CHARLES VIII.
A. D. 1328 TO 1463.

KING EDWARD III. CLAIMS THE CROWN OF FRANCE.—WAR WITH THE FLEMINGS.—ROBERT D'ARTOIS.—JACQUES ARTEVILLE.—WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.—THE FLEMINGS INTERDICTED FROM MAKING WAR AGAINST FRANCE.—GREAT SEA FIGHT.—JEANNE DE VALOIS.—JEANNE DE MONTFORT.—DEATH OF ARTEVILLE.—GEOFFREY D'HARCOURT.—BATTLE OF CRECY.—SIEGE OF CALAIS.—LOUIS LE MÂLE.—CHARLES THE BAD.—BATTLE OF POICTIERS.—THE BLACK PRINCE.—JOHN IN CAPTIVITY.—HARSH TREATMENT OF THE POPE.—DU GUESCLIN.—DE CLISSON.—PHILIPPE LE HARDI.—PIERRE DE CRAYON.—LOUIS D'ORLEANS. THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY.—BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.—DEATH OF HENRY V.—JOAN OF ARC.—WARS AND REBELLIONS.—GENERAL STATE OF THE COUNTRY.



PERSEVERINGLY opposed as the Salic law had often been, its supporters were not a little cheered, to see it successfully appealed to, twice within a very short period. Philippe de Valois triumphed over Jane D'Evreux, daughter of Louis *le Hutin*, as well as over the young Blanche, to whom the widow of Charles *le Bel* gave birth two months after that monarch's death. He, however, had to deal with another competitor, more formidable than either, if not from his rights, at least from his power. This was Edward III. of England, who now claimed the crown of France, in right of his mother Isabella, sister to the late king. "If," said Edward, "the Salic law excludes females from the throne, it is because it deems them incapable of reigning, but that reason cannot hold good, against their sons, the heirs of their rights." To that, the

friends of Philippe responded, that, "it was impossible for a right to be transmitted, by one who did not possess it." The brother-in-law of the king, Robert d'Artois, distinguished himself, protesting loudly in the assembly of barons, against the pretensions of the king of England. He confidently expected, that if the house of Valois should prevail, the result would be for him happier than it proved. The nation, however, would not consent to recognise the grandson of Edward I. for its sovereign, and Philippe ascended the throne with little opposition. Edward appealed to the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, against the decision of the French barons. The Flemings, always ready to shew their hostility to that royal family which had given them so much cause for complaint, gave Philippe the name of the *newly found king*. Without heeding what had been done elsewhere, he applied himself to settle the succession by coming to an arrangement with the daughter of Louis *le Hutin*. She claimed the inheritance of Joan de Navarre, which he conceded to her with the exception of certain fiefs, and reserving to himself Champagne and la Brie.

The Flemings, as was their custom, revolted on the death of the last king. The citizens of Bruges, Cassel and Ypres, deposed their count, Louis de Rhetel, and established a sort of democracy under the direction of Nicolas Zanequin, burgomaster of Bruges. Count Louis took refuge in France; and Philippe, eager to give his royal authority, as yet but imperfectly established, the sanction of some great deed in arms, readily consented to dispatch an expedition against the rabble of Flanders. He took the oriflamme from St. Denis, and marched for the frontier, where he was soon joined by the chivalry of France, and by that of all the states on the banks of the Rhine, who were anxious to support the cause of nobility. Philippe had consequently in his camp a hundred and seventy banners, at the head of which, he took up a position at the foot of Mount Cassel, where Zanequin was entrenched at the head of his military citizens. The position of the Flemings was unassailable; and they knew it so well, that in the midst of their encampment they displayed a cock, painted on muslin, with this taunting inscription:

"When the cock here seen shall crow,
How to get in your king will know."

Philippe did not attempt to enter; but he sent two of his marshals to carry fire and sword through the neighbouring country to Bruges. The Flemings, who commanded a view of the plains from their mountain, could not long endure to witness the burnings which were thus made. Their chief, Zanequin, gained an opportunity of examining the French camp at his leisure, disguised as a fish vendor; and the next evening—August 23rd—at the hour when the knights were preparing to play at dice, and when the great lords were promenading from tent to tent, to display their fine robes, the Flemish army silently advanced in three divisions, and attacking with pikes those who first presented themselves, pushed on direct for the king's tent. Fortunately, the men-at-arms in the camp were ready, bravely to sustain the first shock, while their comrades in the tents hastened to put on

their armour. Philippe, hastily called from his bed by his confessor, had his armour supplied by the unskilful hands of his chaplain. Hastening to the field, he soon saw the knights collected round the oriflamme, and joining battle with the national cry of "Mountjoye! St. Denis!" The strife soon became unequal. No longer shrouded in darkness, on all sides the Flemings were perceived. They condensed their three columns into close battalions, and long they made the cavalry recede from their pikes; but overpowered in the end, almost all of them, with their leader, Zannekin, remained on the battle-field. None had attempted to retreat of those that fell, and the dead lay in three heaps on the place where the contest had commenced.

This terrible battle terminated the war at once. Bruges, Cassel, and other cities surrendered. The citizens of Ypres, from whom five hundred hostages were demanded, having anew attempted to resist, were visited with fire and sword. In one house, fifteen persons were burned; a priest, who had excited the last revolt, was one of them. The fortifications were razed, and the great bell removed from the tower and carried away. More than ten thousand Flemings miserably died in three months. This triumph was glorious for the new dynasty; but Philippe did not withdraw without feeling deep regret that he should have brought upon himself the hatred of a people so heroic, for the benefit of another. "Count," said he, on taking leave, "I came here at your request, perhaps in consequence of your having neglected to govern with justice; I could not come but with great expence and severe labour to myself and my followers. I now restore to you, in a spirit of pure liberality, without charge, your country pacified and submissive. Beware how I am called here again through injustice, for then I shall come on my own account, and not on yours."

In the following year, Edward attended to do homage to the King of France for his fiefs of Guienne and Ponthieu. It always wounded the pride of the English kings to go through this humiliating ceremony, before princes to whom they considered they were at least equal; but on this occasion the self-love of the crowned vassal was wounded more than usual: his suzerain was but the son of a count. *The newly found king*, who had taken from Edward what he deemed his inheritance, and those about him, wished the homage to be rendered on his knees, the head bare, and also without gloves, sword or spurs. Edward came armed, wearing his crown on his head, and could scarcely be induced to lay aside his sword and spurs. This submission, tardily made, and with a bad grace, was anything but conciliating; and the two kings could with difficulty preserve the appearance of amity. The sad affair of Robert d'Artois, hastened the evidently approaching rupture.

Philippe had nobly recompensed his brother-in-law for the support which he had afforded him in the assembly of barons. He had erected in his favour the county of Beaumont into a peerage, and "during three years," says Froissart, "everything done in France was done by him." But nothing could console the nephew of Mahaut for the loss of the fine province of

Artois, which was the more important, as it was almost constantly in a state of hostility with the Flemish communes. All that royal favour could do, availed not against the peremptory orders of the parliament, which were hostile to Robert's views. Royalty was then in a dependant state, and to break with its instruments would have been dangerous. In despair, Robert applied to La Divion, a woman of Bethune, formerly the mistress of the bishop of Arras, who furnished him with false title deeds to strengthen his claim, and documents to prove them genuine, which she reported herself to have found among the papers of the bishop. La Divion had cut the seals from certain charters, to append to the instruments which she had forged, and Robert believed all to be correct ; but on reference to the registers, the fabrication was exposed, and the parliament, resenting the fraud, shewed no disposition to spare the favourite of the king. The documents were ordered to be destroyed, and the framer of them to be burnt. While these events were in progress, the Countess Mahaut coming to Paris to assert her rights, died suddenly. Three months afterwards, Jane, her daughter, died, as it was said, from drinking claret. These incidents were viewed with suspicion, and accusations accumulated on all sides against Robert, who whether guilty or not, determined to withdraw, and accordingly fled, first to Guienne, and afterwards to Brabant, being pursued wherever he went by summonses from the parliament, "touching certain matters, civil and criminal." Once thrown into the stream of lawlessness and revolt, he no longer knew where to pause ; and in this situation he applied to a reputed necromancer at Brussels, to have a waxen figure made of the queen and her son John. These images being made, after the first magic preparations, they were baptized by a priest,



such being the usual ceremony. Pierced in the breast, the figures were then to be exposed to the rays of the sun, which, as the wax melted, was expected

to destroy the intended victims of the preparation. This attempt being discovered, the measure of Robert's guilt was thought to be full; his estates were confiscated, his wife, the king's sister, was imprisoned with her children; and he himself, driven from Brabant, and afterwards from Namur, by the menaces of Philippe, had no resource but to throw himself into the arms of the King of England, whom he now strove incessantly to excite to enforce his claim to the crown of France, that claim which Robert himself had formerly so strongly resisted, by an appeal to arms!

It was, however, five years before Edward could be prevailed upon to take such a step. In Scotland he continued the work commenced by his grandfather; and notwithstanding the victories gained, he had not sufficiently triumphed over the national hostility as to feel at his ease. He sounded by his envoys the German noblesse, and engaged to take into his pay a powerful auxiliary force from the banks of the Rhine. The archbishop of Trèves, who had raised a body of soldiers for his service, was guaranteed payment by the crown of England being put into his possession. The archbishop of Cologne, in like manner, received the king's sword.

From the time of Edward I., the most certain allies of England were the Flemings. To the hatred of ancient days, was now added the recent bloody reminiscences of Cassel. After what they had suffered, Count Louis, the creature of the French king, could not hope for the favour of the working class; and besides, the despotic humour of Philippe hurried him on to measures which he might not of himself have adopted. In this year [1336] Edward, unable to gain from his rival that abandonment of his Scotch allies which he demanded, convoked the bishops and English barons at Nottingham, to deliberate on the state of the nation. This was a prelude to war. Already the fleet of Edward had assembled at Portsmouth, when Philippe ordered Count Louis to arrest all the English merchants or others of that nation, who might be found in his territory. To retaliate, Edward immediately prohibited the exportation of wool from England, and the importation of cloth from Flanders. This was a severe blow for the count, as half the commerce of Flanders depended on the supply of English wool, and the sale of the cloths made from it. From one end of the country to the other, the universal cry was heard against the man, who, having first invaded the privileges of his people, now came to annihilate their commerce. Chiefs were never wanting in this country to lead a revolt; but on this occasion one presented himself who eclipsed all others. The individual who now claimed the distinction was Jacques Arteville, a rich brewer, the grand master of the trades of Ghent, whose vast concerns occupied more than ten thousand workmen and labourers. A meeting having been called of the heads of the corporations, to consider what steps were necessary to avert ruin from Flemish industry, he was attacked in his apartment by the emissaries of the count; but the people hastened to his defence, and drove the assailants out of the city. Bruges made a similar demonstration, as did

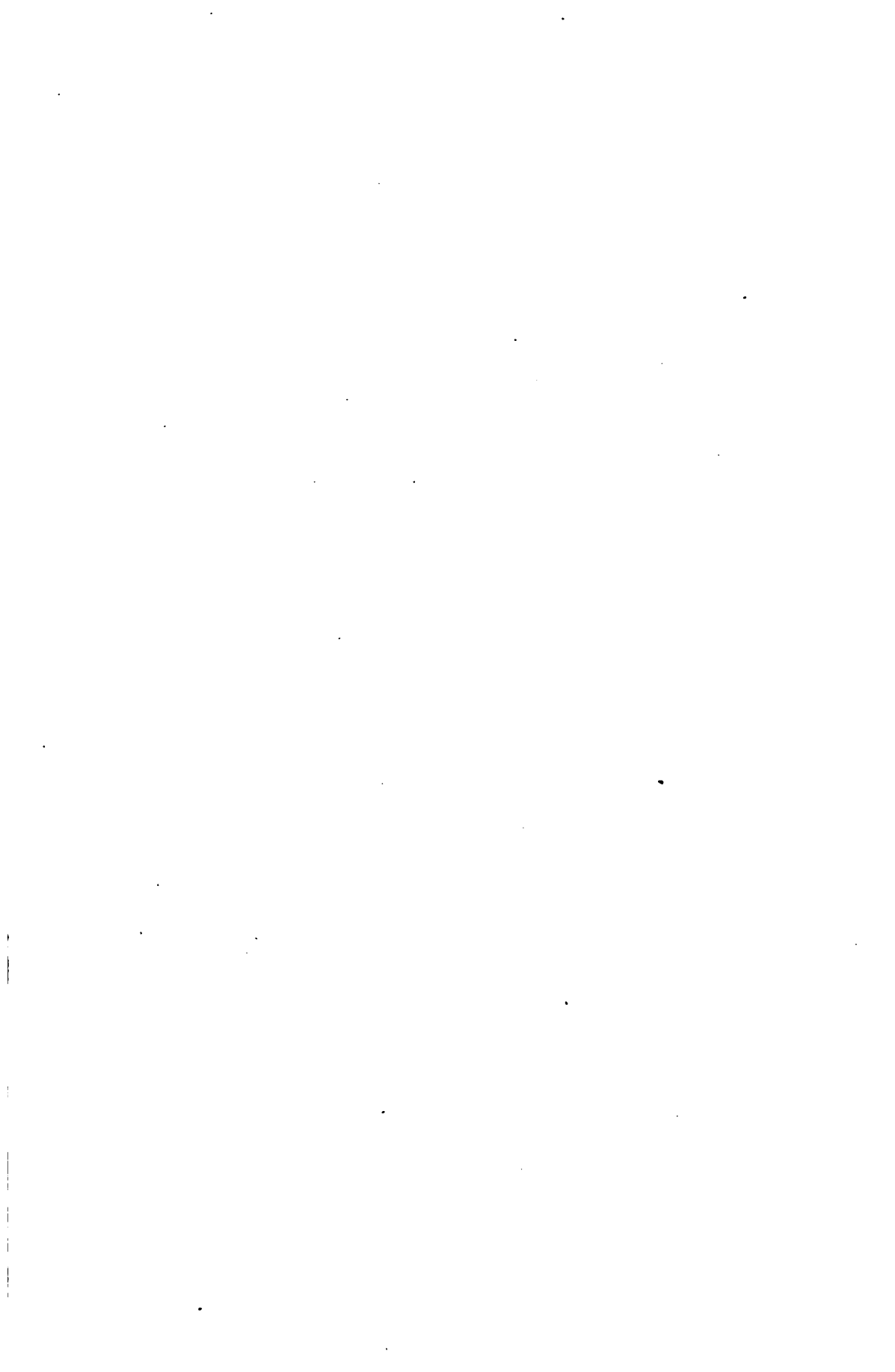
Ypres; and subsequently every neighbouring city, one after another. Admonished by the disasters of the last war, measures were taken for offering a more vigorous resistance; and with this object in view, the malcontents formed a confederacy, of which they chose the brewer of Ghent to be the head. *Master Jacques*, as he was called, became virtually the Count of Flanders. He marched through the streets escorted by eighty or a hundred of the trades, with their cross-bows and truncheons, ready at a word or a sign from him, to give death to any enemy to their cause. All the contributions which had been paid to Louis he caused to be raised in his name, and disposed of them as he pleased.

The Flemish nobles, impotent to resist this chief of the lower orders, protested, at least by flight, against the odious reign of the brewer. St. Omer was the rendezvous of the emigrants, and they called on the King of France to come to their aid. War could not be deferred—Edward no longer hesitated what course to pursue, and the affair of the count was now lost in the contest between the two kings. All the chivalry of England came to Valenciennes to treat with the nobles of Germany. It was some time before, that that famous scene occurred so well described by Froissart, where Robert d'Artois, impatient of delay, swore before all the court of Edward on the heron, the noblest bird of falconry, to enter without loss of time, lance in hand, the dominions of Philippe. To Valenciennes young batchelors came, one eye being covered with red cloth, who had made a vow to their mistresses never to see again with both eyes, till they had caused their prowess to be acknowledged in France. Edward promised fifteen Florentine florins to each who appeared in iron armour. The whole of the noblesse soon flocked to his standard, with the exception of the Bishop of Liege and the celebrated John of Bohemia. Arteville, most interested to all appearance in a cause which was originally his, appeared to hesitate. The Flemings, so bold in opposing their count, trembled at the thought of being excommunicated by the Pope, and Philippe, it was known, could influence as he pleased the Popes of Avignon. The legates of Benoit XII. had interdicted to them all war against the Kings of France, whatever the cause might be, under pain of a fine of two millions of florins. They feared to have to pay this sum, or have no longer masses, bells, or baptismal ceremonies. To soothe these timorous consciences, Master Jacques proposed to Edward that he should assume the title and the arms of the King of France, which done, the interdict must fall of itself, and the several cities would unscrupulously declare for him.

The king heard with astonishment a suggestion so extravagant. It was at variance with all ideas of chivalry to put the crown of another monarch on his head, before having won it by force of arms. While he meditated on this, Sir Walter Manny, one of Edward's bravest knights, commenced the war by attacking the isle of Cadsand, situate between Flanders and England, in which Louis de Rhetel had placed a garrison. The winter passed in mutual demonstrations, and in the following year [1338] Edward landed at Antwerp,



Swearing by the Heron.



and put himself in communication with Louis of Bavaria, the declared enemy of the King of France. The latter had forced the Pope to leave him under



excommunication, in doing which the pacific Benoit XII. manifested much reluctance, and said on one occasion to the imperial envoys, with tears in his eyes, that he was threatened with the fate of Boniface, if he gave their master absolution without the sanction of the King of France. Louis revenged the hostile intervention in the following manner:—On the 3rd of September he caused two thrones to be erected in the market-place of Coblentz; on one, which was more elevated than the other, the emperor took his seat, the sceptre in his right hand, the globe in the left, while a naked sword was held by a German knight above his head. He then solemnly declared that Philippe had forfeited all claim to the protection of the empire, and proclaimed Edward to be imperial vicar, for seven years, of all the provinces to the left of the Rhine. Philippe, in great force, waited for Edward at Amiens, but it was not till the middle of the summer of 1339 that all the barons of Belgium and the Rhine were prepared to act with the sixteen hundred men-at-arms, and the ten thousand archers which Edward had brought over from England. Sir Walter Manny, who had sworn to the ladies that he would be the first to enter France, went forward with forty men-at-arms, and surprised the castle of Thun-l-Evêque. The army soon appeared before Cambray, which, however, was not taken, and Robert d'Artois now led the invading force into Picardy, where his wishes were fully gratified. "Our people," Edward wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury,

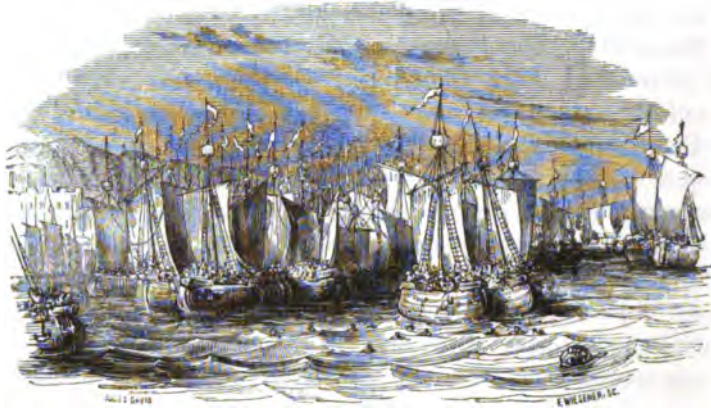
“commonly ravage twelve or fourteen leagues breadth of country from day to day, and all this space is most completely swept clean of corn, cattle, and other necessities. On this occasion a curious instance was afforded of the operation of the feudal laws. The Count of Hainault, who was at once vassal to Philippe and Louis, had followed Edward as the imperial vicar into Cambresis, which was regarded as a city of the empire; but scarcely had he set foot in Picardy when he quitted the English camp, taking with him the Count de Namur and five hundred lances, to join the King of France, his other suzerain. The invaders had arrived at the foot of the mountain of St. Quentin, and Philippe decided to pass the Somme, and established himself at Virenfosse, two leagues from Capelle, where the enemy was encamped. He had with him a hundred thousand men, to whom Edward could only oppose forty-four thousand, but he was nevertheless desirous of giving battle, and Friday, the 22nd of October, was fixed upon for the conflict. Early in the morning the two armies prepared for the struggle. Edward made almost all his men dismount, and formed the knights in three solid bodies, the archers being in their front, a disposition which in a future day was to serve him so largely at Crécy. The men-at-arms in Philippe’s camp remained in their saddles all day, expecting the signal for battle, which, however, was not given. Philippe had just received letters from his cousin Robert of Naples, a great astrologer, which warned him to beware of the star of Edward in battle. One defeat, he reflected, might leave his whole kingdom at the mercy of the English. He was further apprehensive of the result of a contest hazarded on a Friday, a day of evil augury, and one which was reprobated by the pious as being unfit for the commencement of any good work, seeing it was on that day of the week that Jesus Christ suffered death. While he was still occupied with these meditations night came on, and the next morning, Edward, who was at the gate of Hainault, sent off his baggage, and hastened to quit France. He wished to pass the winter at Brussels, where Arteville joined him, with the leading men of the great cities. It was there that Edward was prevailed upon to take the brewer’s advice, and declare himself King of France, and it was then the *Fleurs de lis* first were seen emblazoned with the arms of England. The new King of France received immediately the homage of the Flemish cities, after which he returned to England to demand from his parliament new supplies of men and money.

Great was the indignation felt at the Louvre when it was known what had passed at Brussels. The Pope at Avignon was immediately written to, and without delay a sentence of excommunication was launched against the Flemings, so horrible that no priest, after that had appeared, could be found to celebrate divine service. The subterfuge resorted to by the English king to avert such a calamity was of no avail. Edward, however, was undismayed, and wrote to the several cities, that on his return he would bring with him priests, who should be ready to sing masses, whether the Pope would consent to it or not.

In the spring of the following year, [1340] John, Duke of Normandy, eldest son of the King of France, resentful of the ravages made by the English on the French frontier, overran the whole of Hainault, which had shewn itself ill affected to Philippe, and besieged the castle of Thun-l-Evêque, which had been surprised by Sir Walter Manny. The defence was obstinate, as was the attack. The French availed themselves of engines of extraordinary power, and threw enormous stones into the town, which crushed the roofs of the houses, and compelled the inhabitants to betake themselves to the cellars. John subsequently adopted another system. He threw from his machines dead horses and the remains of other animals, with which the camp was encumbered. The stench and infection thus caused soon compelled the garrison to capitulate, and to agree to surrender at the end of a fortnight, if efficient succour were not sooner afforded. Such assistance was brought by William of Hainault, who arrived at the head of a large army, and Arteville, who came with sixty thousand men under his command. Philippe soon approached, and for the second time found himself on the verge of a battle, and a second time he hesitated to strike the blow. The Flemings, waiting for the arrival of Edward, contented themselves with lending feeble assistance to the garrison of Thun-l-Evêque, and cared not to fight in the absence of the chief spirit of the war.

He soon arrived, exulting in a great success which he had gained over the enemy. Since the time of Philippe le Bel, and the alliance of Scotland, the command of the sea had been an object of some moment, and the navy of France had risen into great importance. In 1339, it had acted a considerable part, and while the chivalry of the nation remained inactive at Amiens and Virenfosse, the French mariners revenged Picardy, at Plymouth, Dover, Southampton, Rye, and Sandwich. They took from Edward his largest ship, called the St. Christopher, and threw her crew overboard. When the English left their own harbour, June 23rd, 1340, the French fleet, consisting of one hundred and forty large vessels of war, proposed to receive them off Sluys. Their admirals, Hue de Kernel and Nicholas Béhuchet, formerly clerk of finance to the king, would not listen to the advice of General Barbavara, an old naval *condottieri*, who, for a stipulated sum, came to the assistance of the French with forty Genoese galleys. The French commanders crowded their vessels together into a narrow creek. Barbavara, on seeing the English approach, stood out to sea, declaring that "he would keep his galleys out of that hole." The battle was desperate and bloody. Edward, perceiving the French pressed one upon another, and that their masts were intermingled like the trees of a forest, commenced the action by boarding the St. Christopher. It was carried, and the fight, which was conducted according to the traditions of antiquity, became general. Great hooks were thrown attached to iron chains to hold the ships together; platforms were used to connect them, and the combatants charged each other as they would have done in the field. The English archers galled the French severely.

Edward and his nobles fought with great bravery. The battle lasted from six in the morning till three in the afternoon, and the French, notwithstanding



the disadvantage of their position, with the aid of Barbavara still continued the struggle, when a number of massive Flemish barks showed themselves at the mouth of the port. This reinforcement to the English, Hume remarks, "coming unexpectedly, had a greater effect than in proportion to its powers and numbers," and in consequence, the French sustained a severe defeat. Their fleet was in fact annihilated, and the English, exasperated by the devastation which it had carried to their coasts, would give no quarter. The crews could not escape by taking to the shore, for there the infuriated Flemings waited for them in arms. More than thirty thousand men fell that day. Nicolas Béhuchet, who better understood casting up accounts, than how to direct a naval engagement, acted the part of a brave man, but at the close of the fight, falling into the hands of the English, they hanged him from the mast of his own ship, "to spite the King of France." Barbavara, always prudent, like a true mercenary, easily withdrew from the strife in which he had been but half engaged, and saved himself and his forty galleys by flight. So great a calamity, it is said, no courtier dared to make known to Philippe, and it was from a hint dropped by his jester that he was apprised of the loss he had sustained.

The victory was glorious for Edward. Suffering as he did, from a wound which he had received in his thigh, he hastened, surrounded by a great crowd of Flemings, to render thanks to God at the Nôtre Dame of Rotembourg, and he then called a council of war at Wilvorde, at which the siege of Tournay was resolved upon. Robert d'Artois meanwhile, who had always deemed the war not sufficiently animated, went with Arteville to besiege St. Omer. Eudes of Burgundy, who had become a count by his marriage with the grand-daughter of Mahaut, attacked the fierce pretender, and compelled

him to a shameful retreat, after taking from him certain standards and arms. Edward did not continue so fortunate. At the news that Tournay was menaced, all the flower of the French chivalry threw itself into the fortress, which was provided with artillery, a word here used for the first time, but which may be found in the old chronicles from the commencement of Philippe's reign. The enemy's army amounted to a hundred and twenty thousand men. During the first days of the siege, the King of France encamped between Lille and Douay, with numbers still more considerable. He had with him the kings of Scotland, Bohemia, and Navarre; the French feudal chiefs, and those of the smaller neighbouring powers; the counts of Savoy, Geneva, and Montbeliard; the bishops and the lords of Lorraine. Every day saw new bands arrived from various places. All the French knights came as to a fête, and impetuously demanded to be led against the enemy.

Six weeks had now passed since the commencement of the siege, and the garrison began to find itself exhausted. Philippe caused his army to defile by the famous bridge of Bouvines, a route of good augury to repel an invasion, and posted himself, as in 1339, within two leagues of his rival, who, perceiving him so near, sent to defy him to single combat, which, however, was not accepted. Edward found himself embarrassed by the title of King of France, which he had assumed, as the numerous armies which opposed him made him feel, that it would be difficult to sustain it by conquest. The posture of his affairs was unfavourable, for while he attacked France in the north, his possessions in Guienne had been seized, and Bordeaux alone remained in his hands. Scotland had revolted, and some of his generals had there met with defeat. After being six weeks before Tournay, he had accomplished nothing; and as Philippe would neither give battle nor answer the personal challenge sent to him, he felt disposed to avail himself of the proffered good offices of Jeanne de Valois, his mother-in-law, the sister of Philippe. Anxious to restore peace between her son and her brother, she went from camp to camp, labouring to that end—regardless of the murmurs of the two armies, who were ashamed of having been so long in each other's presence without coming to action. She eventually succeeded in concluding a truce for a year, which was afterwards extended to 1342. Neither nation had had time to respire from hostilities in the interval. Edward proceeded with all speed from Tournay, to conduct the war in Scotland; and Philippe had scarcely returned to Paris, when he found on his hands the famous quarrel of Penthievre and De Montfort in Britany.

It was this struggle, important in the history of France, which, from the contention of Edward and Philippe, gave Britany a place in general history. The Breton peasant had succeeded in remaining Celtic, under all the political changes which had been witnessed, as indeed he is still seen. In Britany, the head of the soil was poor, and was more like the leader of a clan than the feudal baron. His sons would pass from the drawbridge, to fight with the children of the neighbouring village, and frequently withdrew not a

little damaged by the strife in which they had been engaged. These rude warriors were of admirable use to France in her quarrels with England.



Britany then became a seminary for soldiers and generals, to whom (it will suffice to mention three names, Du Guesclin, Clisson and Richemond,) she owed her greatest victories. Britany claimed to be independent; but from the day when she invoked foreign aid, she ceased to exist as a nation.

John III., Duke of Britany, died on the 30th April, leaving his duchy to his niece, Jeanne de Penthièvre, whom he had married three years before, to the nephew of the King of France, Charles de Blois. The great question of the Salic law was here again agitated. John III. had a brother, John de Montfort, whose pretensions to the sovereignty were favoured by all Britany, by whom a French prince was viewed with great suspicion. On receiving news of the death of his brother, Montfort hastened to Limoges, where the ducal treasure was deposited which the citizens for certain largesses gave into his hands, through the exertions of his wife, Jeanne the Fleming, who had the courage of a man with the heart of a lion. He got himself recognised as duke by the principal cities in the duchy. Charles de Blois appealed to his uncle, and Philippe referred both parties to the court of peers, whose decision on the question it was easy to foresee. Montfort, who had come to Paris with four hundred knights, immediately saw that his cause was lost. Without waiting for the interested award of those who were made his judges, he mounted his horse, and quietly and secretly returned with all speed to Britany, in order to prepare for war. The court of Parliament soon gave its decision in favour of Penthièvre, by an order, dated Conflans, September 27th, 1341. "Noble nephew," said the king to Charles de Blois, "you have, by a judgment pronounced, a grand and beautiful inheritance;—make haste to wrest it from him who wrongfully holds it, and call your friends to your aid." All the French court now assembled at Angers. Charles brought three thousand cross-bow men of Liguria, and entered into Britany



Jeanne de Montfort presenting her son to the Breton nobles.

by the route of Nantes, of which he immediately commenced the siege. Montfort suffered himself thoughtlessly to be shut up there, for there were more French at Nantes than in any other part of Brittany. The besiegers, to strike terror into the defenders of the fortress, opened hostilities, by throwing into it from their machines the heads of thirty knights belonging to the Montfort party, who had been made prisoners. The citizens did not hold out long—they opened the gates themselves, and gave up the duke, who was sent to Paris, and shut up in a tower of the Louvre. The French now thought the struggle was over, but Jeanne boldly took upon herself to carry on the war, and called together at Rennes her friends and hired soldiers, in the midst of whom she appeared, holding her little son in her arms, whom she had named John, after his father. “Gentlemen,” said she, “will you not defend my little son, the son of him whom you have lost : look on my infant, in whom, if God so please, he will be restored to you.” She then passionately exhorted them to take up arms in his cause, and taking the child with her, in the same spirit she went to the other cities of the duchy in succession, and pleaded with equal earnestness and the like good fortune. The English, with whom her husband had treated, she had expected to arrive shortly after his flight from Paris. That she might be nearer to receive them, she came to Hennebon, on the sea coast, and there found herself besieged in the spring of 1342. Jeanne, on that occasion, traversed the streets on horseback in armour, called on all knights to prove their valour, and herself headed their sorties against the enemy. The siege was continued, however, and the English did not appear. Louis of Spain, a descendant of Lacerda, field marshal to Charles, had brought to Rennes twelve large battering machines, which damaged the walls so terribly, that already the ramparts threatened ruin to all who were near them. Notwithstanding the prayers and the example of the heroic countess, the garrison had already made overtures to the enemy, when the countess, looking towards the sea from a window in the castle, suddenly exclaimed, “Behold—behold the English succours, so long desired ! No capitulation now.” The soldiers ran to the battlements, and thence beheld vast multitudes of ships : these, with six thousand archers, under the command of Sir Walter Manny, had been at sea sixteen days. Their arrival restored the equilibrium which had been lost, and the truce having expired, the King of England seriously applied himself to recommence the contest. “He was advised,” Froissart says, “that the finest entrance to conquer France was from Brittany.” The countess, who had been to England to solicit additional aid, returned with a fleet of forty-six vessels, commanded by Robert d’Artois. Louis d’Espagne waited for him on his passage, with thirty-two large Spanish and Genoese ships. They met near the coast of Guernsey, at the hour of vespers, and immediately engaged. On this occasion, Jeanne did not forfeit the high reputation she had gained for courage, for, sword in hand, she bravely fought with Robert and her companions. Night put a stop to the action, and a

storm coming on, in the morning the combatants were far distant from each other. The English, passing Cape Finistere, landed at Vannes, which they carried by assault. Robert de Beaumanoir presented himself immediately before that place, with a view of retaking it from Robert d'Artois. He forced the gates, and pressed the felon knight so closely, that, severely wounded, he was glad to avoid capture by going out at the postern. This was the last battle in which Robert took a part. His life had been rendered wretched by ambition and a thirst for vengeance, and now, when transported to Hennebon, he wished to be placed under the care of English doctors. Being sent to England, on his voyage he was so much shaken by sea sickness, that he rapidly grew worse and died. On his arrival in London, [1342] Edward swore to avenge him, and came himself into Britany with that purpose; but he soon discovered that in that country he had nothing to gain. The cities taken and retaken by each party were rifled without profit, and the whole country had been so wasted that neither food nor forage could be obtained. Such being the state of things, the two kings withdrew as by common consent, and left the savage population to tear each other to pieces as they pleased. They reserved their soldiers for a contest of shorter duration, but more important, and quitted Britany in January, 1343.

A truce was concluded, which was to have continued till 1346, but Philippe hastened the return of hostilities by inflicting punishment on certain Breton and Norman lords, who were accused of having sold themselves to the English. Being induced to repair to Paris, they were seized in their chateaus, and decapitated in their own halls. Geoffrey d'Harcourt, the most powerful of the Norman lords, escaped from those who were sent to seize him, and repaired to the English court, the asylum for all the discontented, where he applied himself to act the part of Robert d'Artois.

Of those who, as already stated, were beheaded, Oliver de Clisson, John de Montaubon, and other Breton nobles, Edward maintained belonged to the De Montfort party, and were therefore under English protection. As, however, they had declared for Charles de Blois, if they had entered into engagements with his opponents, they were traitors, and justly liable to punishment. But Edward and his parliament took a different view of the case, and war was the immediate consequence. It began in Guienne on the 24th April, 1343. The Earl of Derby, favoured by the sympathies of the inhabitants, retook, in a few months, almost all the places taken from the English during the war in Flanders; but the events which had occurred in Ghent and La Frise, more than counterbalanced the successes of the earl. Arteville, notwithstanding all his ability, was not able long to retain the favour of that convention, which had made him an absolute monarch over a people singularly jealous of their independence. The Flemings soon turned against each other, that restless spirit which had formerly been indulged but at the expence of their counts. Anarchy stalked forth; the country revolted against the cities, and the corporations and trades took up

arms against each other. At Ghent, the weavers fought with the cloth workers in the great market place, and fifteen hundred lives were lost. That day received the appellation of *Bad Monday*. The weavers were victorious; and Gerard Denys, their syndic, began to make war on the brewer. Count Louis, at the same time, intrigued, that he might no longer be constrained to act the part of a deposed prince. The small towns, which had been crushed by the great communes, were all in his favour. Arteville thought to appease the storm which had been raised against him, by giving up Flanders to the King of England. Edward came to Sluys, where he found the syndics of the several cities convoked to meet him by Arteville. When, however, they found it was proposed to give the sovereign authority to the Prince of Wales, the son of King Edward, not one of them would put his hand to the anti-national act. They appealed against it to all the communities of Flanders, and each returned to his own city. Arteville, on his way to Ghent, felt that he was lost. The common people turned their backs on him in the streets, in place of standing uncovered before him, as had been their custom. Fear seized him. He repaired to his hotel, and there barricaded himself, surrounded by his friends and servants. Gerard Denys followed him at the head of a furious crowd, who blockaded the house before and behind. Master Jacques then appeared bare-headed at the window of a turret. He spoke very mildly, wept, wrung his hands before the people, and only requested that they would allow him till the next day to give an account of the great treasure which had been disbursed. For all answer, he was ordered to come down immediately, and give an explanation that instant. The door was eventually forced, and Arteville, after a search, being discovered in the cellar, crouching behind some beer barrels, fell beneath a thousand wounds.

Edward swore to avenge his friend and dear *compeer*, but suffered himself to be appeased by the submission of certain cities, who sent to excuse the part they had taken. At the same epoch he had to deplore the loss of another most active ally, William de Hainault, whom the Frisons had massacred with all his knights, in an expedition on which he had ventured in the midst of their marshes. William left only sisters behind him; and, in consequence, the emperor, (Louis of Bavaria) gave Hainault, by virtue of the Salic law, to his own son, William of Bavaria. The choice was open to debate, but Philippe shewed himself eager to recognise the new count, in the hope of gaining the Emperor over to his cause. These changes closed against Edward the road through Flanders, and caused him to turn his course to another side.

It was on the 2nd July, 1346, that King Edward sailed from Southampton, taking with him his son, the Prince of Wales, then fifteen years of age, and a large army, comprehending English archers and Welsh and Irish infantry. He directed his course towards Guienne, where the Earl of Derby had to sustain the attacks of a hundred thousand men, and Duke John of Normandy

was already under the walls of Aguilon. On the third day he was thrown by adverse winds off the coast of Cornwall, where he was moved by the repre-



sentations of Geoffrey d'Harcourt, who never ceased to paint out Normandy to him as "one of the richest countries in the world, and one in which the people were never armed," to alter his original determination and sail thither. On the 12th, the English fleet arrived off the Cape of La Hogue, which was not far distant from the former dominions of Geoffrey, and there commenced that celebrated invasion which forms one of the greatest events in modern history, and which had seen no parallel in France since the accession of the Capets. Edward marched along the coast, having formed his army into three columns, which ravaged and burnt at pleasure "that country so abounding in all things." The ports of Harfleur de Valognes, de Carentan, de St. Lô, and Cherbourg, were successively taken and plundered. The country people, who had never seen a military force, and knew nothing of wars and battles, fled before the English as soon as they heard of their approach, leaving their barns full of wheat and barley, pigs, sheep, and the finest oxen in the world; and, in a word, their houses, rich in all sorts of

goods. On the 26th, Edward appeared at the gates of Caen, into which the constable of France, with Count Tancarville, had thrown himself, with some



hundreds of lances. The citizens thought themselves strong enough to cross the river and face the English, but they met with such a reception, that they gave way at the first shock, and pursued, sword in hand, at full speed, the enemy entered the city pell-mell with them. The Counts d'Eu and Tancarville, seeing all was lost, surrendered themselves to an English knight, Sir Thomas Holland, whom they had formerly known. The citizens, however, did not yield so soon. Entrenched in their houses, they defended themselves so well from the roofs with arrows and stones, that already four hundred of the English had fallen, when Edward sent Geoffrey d'Harcourt to them; who, galloping into the main street with his banner, put an end to the defence and the massacre. Thence, the English army advanced into the heart of the country, leaving behind Evreux and Rouen, which, being well defended with soldiers, would have detained it too long. Taking the left bank of the river Seine, Edward advanced to Poissy, where he took up a position, but bands of marauders went further on, and pillaged all those places which had been the abode of French royalty, and with which Paris had been surrounded. St. Germain, Nanterre, Ruel, Boulogne, St. Cloud, Bourg-la-Reine, Neuilly, and Chantilly, were severally visited. Since the celebrated "Hallelujah" sung at Montmartre by the clerks of Orleans, this was the first time that the Parisians had seen an enemy's camp so near, and the flames which ascended from the burning villages in its vicinity, was the subject of more indignation than terror.

Philippe was surprised at this sudden irruption, at a moment when he and all his army were distant a hundred leagues from Paris. He marched to St. Denis, where the troops of the communes and the knights promptly rallied

round the oriflamme. Thither came his German allies, the King of Bohemia, with his son Charles of Luxembourg, recently named emperor by the Pope, the Duke of Lorraine, and the Counts of Salen and Namur. In a short time the numbers that thronged to the camp of St. Denis, greatly exceeded those which were assembled at Poissy, and additional troops arrived from day to day.

The situation of the hostile monarchs was now completely changed. Edward found himself in the midst of an exasperated people, far from his fleet, and from his possessions in Aquitaine; in front of an army outnumbering his own, and constantly on the increase. He had reason to apprehend that he should be made to pay dearly for the pillage in which his followers had indulged, and prepared, with all expedition, to return to Flanders. But measures had already been taken to cut off his retreat. Wishing to conceal his movements from Philippe, a bridge was hastily erected at Poissy, and Edward had just passed the Seine when he met the troops marching from Amiens to St. Denis, and did not get clear of them till after a fierce and bloody combat. He hastily withdrew to Ponthieu, followed by the French, where he found his retreat impeded by the Somme, all the bridges over which had been destroyed by Philippe. The French loudly boasted that they would beat or starve the English. Edward was sadly musing on the means of retreating, when a prisoner was brought to him named Gobin Agace, who, for a bribe, conducted his army to the ford of Blanche-Taque, opposite Crotoy, where twelve men could pass abreast on a strong hard gravel bottom while the tide was down. Godemar du Fay was stationed there to guard the passage with twelve thousand men. He was attacked by the English archers, and overthrown—but the danger was not then at an end. The French army was so near that some of Edward's rear guard were killed by them, but the rising of the tide prevented Philippe from crossing the river, and he was obliged to proceed to the bridge of Abbeville.

Harrassed as his soldiers were, Edward felt the difficulty of reaching the frontier, and the danger of retreating through Picardy, exposed as he was to the incessant attacks of the French cavalry. He therefore wheeled about, and established himself in the woods of Crécy. He formed an entrenchment, in which the carriages and baggage of the army were enclosed; and on the following morning, August 26th, his army appeared drawn up in three lines on the brow of a hill, his son being in advance with the archers.

The French had to march five leagues, in a storm of rain, before they could approach the English, who, after having ate and drank at their leisure, calmly awaited the coming of the enemy. The strings of their bows were well covered by their scarves, and every preparation to receive the foe that prudence could dictate, had been carefully made.

Many causes contributed to the fatal reverse which the French sustained on this memorable occasion. Among them, as of primary importance, Du Verdier mentions an affront offered to their Genoese auxiliaries. In a

council of war, the majority of the captains present were in favour of giving them the advanced point, the post of honour which they claimed ; but the Count of Alençon, who commanded the army, opposed himself to their wish, and spoke contemptuously of their pretensions. The same writer adds that, remembering this, they, in revenge for the affront, gave way before the first charge of the English.

It however appears beyond all doubt, that the King of France and his mighty host, deeming victory certain, neglected all ordinary precautions. The soldiers, from their communes, are said to have drawn their swords while yet they were some miles distant from the enemy, and excited by the prospect of complete success, they ran in a disorderly manner through the streets, shouting "Death to the English !" It was in vain that the generals endeavoured to bring this confused crowd to observe order ; and Philippe, when he saw the English, from the hatred he felt for them, impetuously ordered the Genoese archers at once to "advance to battle, in the name of God and St. Denis." The Genoese reluctantly went forward ; but the strings of their bows, damaged by the rain, could not send their darts more than a few paces, and galled by the shafts of the English archers, which flew so thick, that the spectacle they afforded was said to resemble a snow-storm, they were thrown into irreparable confusion. In their distress, they sought to shelter themselves behind the men-at-arms. Their misconduct greatly exasperated Philippe, who called to the Count of Alençon with a loud voice, "Kill this rabble out of the way. They impede our operations, and do no good." This imprudent speech increased the general disorder ; the Genoese were attacked by their own companions. Charged by the cavalry, with their long cutlasses they opened the bowels of the horses of their assailants ; while the English archers, in perfect tranquillity, applied themselves to assist the work of death with terrible effect, and the artillery opening at the same time, gave the whole scene unwonted horrors to the dismayed French, to whom it appeared that the thunder of the Almighty was directed in vengeance against them. A dreadful massacre took place. The Prince of Wales did not fail promptly to take advantage of the disorder which prevailed in the ranks of his enemies. The Earls of Arundel and Northampton advanced to sustain his charge ; but by this time the French nobility, having exerted themselves to put an end to the confusion, pressed upon the young warrior with superior numbers, and with such success, that the Earl of Warwick, alarmed for the probable result, sent to Edward, to entreat him to afford assistance to the Prince of Wales.

Edward had remained on the brow of a hill, by the side of a windmill, tranquilly watching the progress of the battle, when he saw the earl's messenger approach. He listened to him with unmoved countenance, and enquired, "Is my son killed, or wounded?"—"Neither, sire," was the answer. "Then," replied the monarch, "go back to the prince, and tell the boy, it is now that he is to win his spurs in battle, for the honour of this

great day, if God permit, I reserve for him." This speech, reported to the youthful warrior in the hearing of those who were near his person, gave the English new courage, and they fought with more desperate valour than



before. The Count Alençon was killed in a charge, which overthrew many of the French cavalry ; and the Welsh infantry, pouring upon the dismounted with their long knives, cut the throats of all that had fallen. As the evening came on, the carnage became dreadful in the extreme. Edward had directed that no quarter should be given ; and the dispersed French, wandering in small bodies over the wide spreading plain, could no longer offer resistance to the victors, and were slaughtered without mercy. The King of France had advanced with the rear-guard to sustain his brother ; but his efforts were fruitless. Victory declared for the English, and nothing that courage or prudence could then attempt, was able to arrest their triumphant career. Mournful was the issue of the day for France. The King of Bohemia, the Duke of Lorraine, the Count of Flanders, and eighty other noblemen were among the slain. From twenty to thirty thousand common soldiers were found dead on the field, by the two barons sent by Edward on the following

morning to bury the dead. Philippe was himself in imminent danger. The day had closed, he had already had one horse killed under him ; and now, unable to restore order to his routed army, and attended by only five barons and sixty men-at-arms, he seemed obstinately bent on continuing the fight. He could not be prevailed upon to leave the battle-field, till John of Hainault, seizing his bridle, earnestly called to him, "Come away, sire. It is high time to withdraw," and in a manner led him away by force. With this small escort, Philippe reached the chateau of Broye, where the drawbridge having been taken up, as the night was very dark, "Open—open castellan," cried Philippe, in the anguish of his heart, "it is the unfortunate King of France."

The great advantage which Edward proposed to himself from this victory, was securing an easy entrance into France for all time to come, that he might the more easily defend his possessions in Guienne. Calais being but seven leagues from the English coast, he determined to make his own. It was at this period well provided with ramparts and a good garrison. Edward doubted if it could be taken by assault, and determined to reduce it by famine. Great were the preparations which he made to secure the success of this undertaking. An arm of the river Haule branches off at a short distance from Calais to the west, leaving a considerable space between its bed, the sea and the city. Edward caused wooden houses to be erected here, and formed in fact a new town, where a market was held on Wednesday and Saturday in each week. He gave it the name of *Ville-Neuve-la-Hardie* ;—and there all sorts of French and English merchandize was bought and sold. To traders and others great facilities were given ; and every arrangement was made for general convenience, as if it had been intended to occupy this spot ten or twenty years.

The English, while thus establishing themselves at the gates of Calais, on the side of Aquitaine, did not fail to profit from the victory at Créçy. Before the battle, the French army, which had been encamped near Aguillon, had marched for Paris, leaving the country open to the Earl of Derby, who, advancing to Poitou, took it by assault, as also several other places ; and, after spreading alarm through the country, as far as the Loire, he returned to Bordeaux, there to pass the winter.

Meantime the royal consort of Edward, Queen Philippa of Hainault, bravely resisted the attempts of the Scots, who, by an irruption into England, expected to effect a diversion in favour of France, and compel the abandonment of the newly-established town. In a battle, fought at Newcastle on the 17th October, she defeated them, and made their king, David Bruce, a prisoner, and safely lodged him in the tower of London.

Everything seemed to favour Edward. The Count of Flanders, who had been expelled by his subjects, and who fell at Créçy, left a son, who was wounded in that battle while fighting by his side ; and who, after his death, adhered to the policy of his father. The Flemings, notwithstanding their frequent revolts, preserved a strong attachment to their ancient royal family,

and they now claimed that the son of the late count should be restored to them. Philippe could not but approve of this. The young count, *Louis le Mâle*, was received with great joy by his subjects, but they imposed one condition on him that was to him most offensive, namely, that he should marry Isabella, the King of England's daughter. He refused his consent, and declared he would never marry the daughter of the man who had killed his father. His real objection to the match is believed to have been a personal disinclination for the princess, whom he had had opportunities of seeing. Such an alliance, however, was thought too important to the commercial interests of Flanders, to be sacrificed to a matter of feeling. His firmness on this point gave his subjects great displeasure, and he found himself so closely watched at Ghent, that he could not even indulge in the pleasures of the chase. Worn out by this annoying *surveillance*, he at length gave way, and consented to meet the King of England at a certain time and place, which were named, for the purpose of complying with the wishes of his people. Edward failed not to attend with his daughter, to whom the count was at once formally affianced.

This union, however, from which so much was expected, did not take place. Eight or ten days before the day appointed for the marriage, on the Wednesday in Holy week, Louis quitted Ghent on a fleet horse, giving out that he was going to chase the heron. He let slip his falcon, and followed it so far, assisted by two gentlemen, who waited for him on the banks of the Scheldt with fresh horses, that he made his way to Artois. The more effectually to save himself from being united to Isabella, he immediately married Margaret of Brabant. To Edward he sent excuses, which were accepted, on the condition that he should never oppose any support being given to him which the Flemings might be willing to afford. Eventually, the chase of the heron cost Louis the loss of his sovereignty.

The siege of Calais was still carried on. A year had elapsed since its commencement, and provisions began to fail. The garrison were reduced to eat horse-flesh, dogs, and other domestic animals, and even these means of supporting life were nearly exhausted. Philippe attempted to relieve the besieged, but found the English so strongly entrenched, that he could make no impression on them, and was compelled to withdraw, after vainly inviting the King of England to fight him in the open plain. When Philippe retired, the garrison offered to capitulate, but Edward, exasperated by what he deemed their wanton obstinacy, required that they should surrender at discretion. For a time he refused to grant them any other condition, but was at last induced to abate his rigour so far, as to receive their submission on the following terms :

Six of the principal citizens were to be sent to his camp, bare-headed and barefooted, with ropes about their necks, to deliver to him the keys of the place, the bearers of them to be then dealt with as he should see fit. When these cruel demands were announced, they caused great sorrow in

Calais, not unmixed with indignation. All shrunk from the horrors of choosing the victims who were required for sacrifice, to save the rest. At this juncture, Eustace de St. Pierre, one of the most distinguished townsmen, offered himself as one. Three of his relations, John d'Aire, James and Peter de Wisan, took their places by his side; and two others immediately came forward, to make up the number demanded. It moved great commiseration when the devoted sufferers arrived in the state prescribed, at *Ville Neuve La Hardi*, the new town; and Sir Walter Manny, on introducing them to the royal tent, did not fail humanely to intercede in their behalf. But Edward was inexorable. He could not pardon those who had caused him to lose so much time, and is said to have gnashed his teeth with rage, at the generous interposition of the knight. He ordered St. Pierre and his companions to be instantly led to execution. His gallant and noble-hearted queen, Philippa, was happily present at this interview. As generous here, as she had proved herself brave elsewhere, threw herself at the monarch's feet, and by her tears and earnest solicitations obtained their pardon. She afterwards kindly entertained them, and dismissed the men she had saved with rich presents. Edward took possession of Calais on the 4th of August. He adopted the severe, but not unpolitic measure, of compelling the inhabitants to leave it, with the exception of one priest and two of the oldest townsmen, whose services he needed to make him acquainted with the means of the several families who had had possessions there.

Being desirous of returning to England, after an absence of nearly two years, a truce was concluded, by which both kings were to remain in their present position. Calais was entrusted to the care of Aimery de Pavie, an Italian. This man, though distinguished by his bravery, was destitute of principle, and while Edward was away, suffered himself to be tampered with by Geoffrey de Charni, the French general, who, notwithstanding the truce, thought if he succeeded in regaining Calais, it would be deemed a most acceptable service, and he therefore offered to De Pavie a bribe of twenty thousand crowns to betray his trust. De Pavie yielded to the temptation, but Edward gaining information of what was intended, summoned the faithless governor to London, under the pretence of wishing to advise with him on other matters of importance. When De Pavie arrived, Edward astounded him by shewing that he was in possession of indisputable proofs of his guilt; he, however, spared his life, on condition that he should turn the plot against the French. The Italian agreed to do what Edward asked, and preparations were accordingly made to give De Charni and his men such a reception as they little dreamt of. A thousand men, under Sir Walter Manny, were sent from London to strengthen the garrison. The king and Prince of Wales accompanied them, and arrived at Calais the night before that on which it was to have been surrendered. All this was accomplished with the utmost secrecy, and De Charni, unsuspecting the double treachery of the governor, appeared at the appointed hour, on the 1st of January, 1349,

with a chosen body of men, at the postern gate. They were admitted. De Pavie received the stipulated price of his treason; and the English, rushing upon them, attacked them with great fury. Though confounded at being thus unexpectedly assailed, the French fought with great courage, and a bloody contest was maintained for several hours, in the course of which, all who had entered the fortress, were killed or made prisoners. On this occasion the king served through the night as a private soldier, under Sir Walter Manny. When morning came, he singled out Eustace de Ribeaumont, a Frenchman, who had fought with extraordinary valour, and challenged him by name to a personal combat. Ribeaumont immediately encountered him, and had nearly overpowered his antagonist. Twice Edward was struck down, but rising, he renewed the strife with unabated resolution, till Ribeaumont, finding himself left almost alone, surrendered. It was not till then, that he and his companions in arms knew to whom they had been opposed. Edward entertained his prisoners in Calais with great courtesy, and gave a string of pearls, which he had been accustomed to wear himself, in requital of his valour, to Ribeaumont, and immediately set him at liberty.

The truce lasted till the death of Philippe, in August, 1350. It is probable this long abstinence from hostilities was partly caused by the pestilence which ravaged Europe in 1348, and which was distinguished as the plague of Florence. In 1349, Philippe extended his dominions by purchasing Lattes and Montpellier from the King of Majorca, for 120,000 crowns; and for the sum of 200,000 crowns, he obtained Dauphiny from Humbert de Beaujeu, on condition that the eldest son of the King of France should thenceforth take his title from Dauphiny, as the eldest son of the King of England did his from Wales. It was in consequence of this pact, that the heir of the French throne was through four centuries uniformly styled the dauphin.

On the death of Philippe, he was succeeded by John II., commonly called the Good. This prince, notwithstanding the honourable addition made by historians to his name, was cruel, treacherous, and exacting. He commenced his reign with an act of rigour, for which apparently he could have no rational motive. It may be necessary to explain that, at this period, *the court*, such as it has been known in more recent times, had begun to exist; and high situations about the sovereign conferred more importance than the possession of a strong castle, or a city. Feudal chiefs, though they became courtiers, did not care to loose their influence. They knew as well how to make a bargain for their aid as their less polished forefathers did; but they, unlike them, carried on their plots at court, and under the eyes of their sovereign, by connecting themselves with some disconcerted illustrious personage, most frequently a member of the royal family, to thwart the views of the king, instead of sending messengers from castle to castle, and waiting in arms for his approach. That which gave more power to the nobility was the eternal scarecrow furnished by England, the sure asylum of all whom justice or royal vengeance pursued. Robert d'Artois and Geoffrey d'Harcourt

had shewn the world of what importance the influence of a proscribed man might prove. The power which rebellion thus acquired, bred ceaseless suspicion between the king and the nobility; and when any of the latter incurred the royal displeasure, it was found extremely convenient to accuse them of carrying on a traitorous correspondence with the English. By this mode Philippe had twice relieved himself from those who gave him annoyance, sending the obnoxious individuals to the scaffold. John commenced his reign by imitating, in this respect, the policy of his father. In the midst of the fêtes given in honour of his coronation, he caused the prévôt of Paris to arrest, at the hotel de Nesle, where he held his court, Raoul de Nesle, his constable, and Count of Eu and Guisnes. Three days afterwards, he was beheaded in a corner of the hotel, without any trial. It was reported that Raoul had designed to give up Guisnes to the English, but John never condescended to confirm the rumour, or to give any reason in justification of an execution so unlooked for and so extraordinary. There is reason to believe, that being a prisoner in England, Raoul obtained his release, on promising that a ransom, suitable to his condition, should be paid, and passed into France, in order to find the means of satisfying the obligation. John, being persuaded that the arrangement agreed upon tended to his prejudice, suspected him of treason, and acted as we have seen on that suspicion. The constable suffered in the presence of five or six persons of quality, minions of John, to whom it was said he made full confession of his guilt.

To shew more distinctly his indifference to public opinion, John gave the post, left vacant by the constable's death, to Charles de Lacerda, a gay young man, who had become his favourite—it was suspected most unworthily. This person was the brother of Louis d'Espagne, who had engaged himself in the service of Philippe with a Spanish fleet, as Barbavara had done with his Genoese ships, and was descended from the disinherited Lacerdas, whose cause had been abandoned by Philippe le Bel, notwithstanding they were originally French, and of royal blood. His present advancement to the office of a man who had been put to death, though no judgment had been given against him, did not reconcile to him the minds of the French nobles, who were sufficiently unfavourable before.

The want of money, which incessantly tormented the greedy and pompous princes of the house of Valois, soon rendered the king still more odious. The revolts in the last years of his father had created alarm in the breasts of the royal advisers, and they feared to impose new taxes without the consent of the states general, which were accordingly convoked at Paris in February, 1351. Their decision alone being insufficient to meet his necessities, he applied to Rouen, Amiens, and other cities, severally, to give effect to the votes of the states general. They only consented to meet his wishes, in consideration of his granting them peculiar privileges which they claimed. To extricate himself from this humiliating situation, he hit upon the expedient of seeking new resources, by altering the value of the money in circulation.

At his accession, the silver mark was taken for five livres, five sous—at the end of 1351, it was raised to eleven livres, a variation of cent per cent in the course of a single year. This, however, was only the beginning. In the month of February following, it was suddenly reduced from eleven livres to four livres, five sous; it next rose to thirteen livres, thirteen sous; again fell to four livres, ten sous; and afterwards was once more advanced to eighteen livres. Sixteen variations in the standard of value were made within the space of twelve months! "This," says an energetic historian, "was an instance of law run mad."

Foolishly prodigal of money so miserably acquired, John, seeking opportunities for ostentatious display, discovered one which had not previously been thought of in France. Wishing to equal King Edward in chivalry, as that monarch had established the "Order of the Garter," in honour of the Countess of Salisbury, he determined on a similar step, and founded, accordingly, the order of "The Star" or the *noble house*. He succeeded in turning this to the profit of royalty. All the members of the order, of which the king himself was the grand master, formed a sort of armed fraternity, bound by a particular oath, never to retire before an enemy, beyond a certain limited space, and rather to die or be taken, than retreat altogether. Five hundred knights made this vow. They kept their oath religiously, and at the battle of Poitiers all laid down their lives, resolute not to fly before an enemy, and the order was annihilated in a day. It was subsequently revived, and in some measure sustained till after the time of Louis XIV.

While John was occupied with chivalry, the war with England was continued, or renewed, on the side of Gascony and Poitou. The two nations, notwithstanding the truce had expired, from their mutual want of means, permitted it to be prolonged for a time. They had, however, in doing so, always considered themselves in a state of hostility. They had alternate successes, without effecting anything of great national importance. In 1352, Guy de Nesle, a marshal of France, was defeated and killed by the English; and it was about the same time the French triumphed in the celebrated *Combat of Thirty*. The occasion was this:

Beaumanoir, the governor of Josselin, having been to seek the English captain, Richard Bembro, who commanded in Ploermel, during the conference insulting language was used, on the part of the English and Bretons, to the French, which was returned; and, at parting, a challenge was given to meet thirty on a side on a day named, which challenge was accepted, to contend with swords and other weapons, for the honour of their mistresses. They met on the Saturday before the fourth day of Lent, on a plain between Josselin and Ploermel. The combatants were on foot, with the exception of one of Beaumanoir's knights, William de Montauban, who came on horseback; no one knew why. It was a strangely ferocious fray, in which all sorts of arms were employed of which warlike savages could avail themselves. Thomelin Billefort, one of the English, used a leaden mallet weighing twenty-five

pounds ; and his companion, Hucbeton Clamabon, appeared with a crooked scythe, which had two sharp blades. Five Bretons were disabled at the first shock. Their friends, however, pressing on, Beaumanoir with great perseverance and desperation, sustained the conflict. Suffering from fatigue and loss of blood, Beaumanoir called for drink. "Drink thy own blood, Beaumanoir," Geoffrey Dubois replied, "for to that it must come at last." It was then that William de Montauban was seen to withdraw from the rest, as if he contemplated flight, when suddenly galloping up to the flank of the little band of English warriors, he brought seven to the ground by blows from his sabre. This caused a general rout, and Josselin returned in glory, taking with him as prisoners those who had not been left dead on the field.

Similar scenes, often repeated, familiarised the minds of both nations with death, and blood was recklessly shed. Two years after the Combat of Thirty, Charles, King of Navarre, was called a traitor at the court of John, by the favourite, Charles de Lacerda, who preferred against him the standing accusation, that he was secretly corresponding with England, "Thou liest,"



he replied, "abominable parasite, nor shouldst thou escape my just vengeance, even though thou wert standing in the shoes of King John." To the hatred commonly inspired by the constable, personal resentment was added in this

case, as John had taken the province of Angoulême, to bestow it on the favourite. On the 8th January, 1354, Lacerda went to l'Aigle, in Normandy, which he held with his other domains from the bounty of the king. In the course of the night, the bastard of Mareuil, one of Charles de Navarre's people, entered the city with a troop of men-at-arms, broke open the hotel in which the constable was lodged, and murdered him in his bed. Immediately he ran to rejoin his master, who waited for him out of the city, surrounded by his friends, to whom, when he saw him at a distance, he exultingly cried "It is done! it is done! he is dead!"

Indescribable was the rage of John, when he heard of this outrage. "I do not wish to see nor speak to any one," he exclaimed; "and I make oath before God to revenge myself on the traitor of Navarre." But this was easier said than done. Cunning, insinuating, eloquent in speech, and of unrivalled elegance of manners, Charles united in his favour the good will of the populace, and the admiration of the ladies, two new powers, which he first knew how to convert into a political weapon. He was, however, fierce and vindictive, and had so cruelly repressed a seditious movement at Barcelona, that his subjects, in consequence, gave him the title of Charles the Bad. Besides being connected by his position with England and Gascony, he was omnipotent in Normandy, where he possessed Evreux, Cherbourg, Avranches, Mortain, and many other domains and castles. The D'Harcourts and Longuevilles, his relations, marched at the head of the Norman noblesse, entirely devoted to his cause. By Mantes and Meulan, which he had obtained as an indemnity for the loss of Angoulême, he was master of the Seine, and could at pleasure cut off all communication with Paris. His strong places were in a good state of defence, and the English were ready at his call to give him their support. "Noble cousin," said the Duke of Lancaster, in a communication made to him, "send to the king some one in your confidence, to treat on the subject of a league." John wavered, when he reflected on the powerful means at the command of Charles. The ladies at court interested themselves for him; and Jane d'Evreux, widow of Charles le Bel, and her sister, undertook to effect a negotiation between the king and the murderer of his constable. A royal sitting was held in Paris on the 4th of March, 1354, when Charles came to that city with a large body of soldiers, in a manner that was almost impertinent. He justified the murder of Lacerda in a loud tone, and offered to give his reasons for the deed then or at any other time. John made no reply; but the cardinal of Boulogne, after slightly reprimanding him, told him the king had pardoned him, out of regard for the queen's ladies. The King of Navarre, who had remained standing, his head erect, then knelt on one knee, and placed his hands within those of the king, in token of acknowledgment.

This semblance of a reconciliation deceived no one. John spoke not a word during the whole sitting. Scarcely had it ended when their mutual hate resumed its course. Seeing that John had assembled troops at Rouen,

Charles feared for his own personal safety. He fled in disguise to Avignon, as he gave out, to implore the mediation of the Pope, but, in fact, to confer with the Duke of Lancaster, who was there at that time. The commanders of John immediately seized on his domains in Normandy, with the exception of the fortified cities, which could defend themselves. Charles, upon this, hastened to Navarre, and collected an army of two thousand men, with whom he embarked for Normandy. He reached Cherbourg in the month of August. His garrison at Evreux immediately joined him in the field. The Prince of Wales having passed the Garonne, pushed on to the gates of Narbonne and Toulouse, spreading desolation around as he advanced. King Edward, landing at Calais, ravaged the environs of Hesdin. An English squadron was on its way from the isle of Wight to Normandy, but was detained by contrary winds. Weighing all these circumstances, John consented to be a second time reconciled to the King of Navarre, promised him a donation of one hundred thousand crowns, and again admitted him to his court.

The two kings did not long remain on good terms. The states general met at Paris on the 2nd December, 1355, and granted, at the request of John, for aid to carry on the war, thirty thousand men; but they coupled with the grant certain conditions and demands for reform, which proved that they were becoming sensible of their own importance. At this period, the celebrated Stephen Marcel, the prévôt or leader of the merchants of Paris,



came on the scene. He took upon himself to speak for the other cities of France. The King of Navarre seemed to be placed at the head of the movement which had now commenced. At one of the sittings held at Ruel, John

d'Harcourt, his friend and confidant, in the midst of a group of lords, did not scruple to preach up the duty of resistance to the king. The embarrassments of John were now fearfully increased. The Prince of Wales had returned to Bordeaux, his carriages laden with a rich booty, and to add to the French king's grief and vexation, Charles persuaded the dauphin to leave his father, and join him. An escort of thirty men were to guard him on his way, but one Friquet, having made known the plot to John, the flight of his son was prevented.

This attempt touched him nearly. The dauphin, having become Duke of Normandy, held his court at Rouen, and still maintained amicable relations with the King of Navarre. He received a visit from the latter in the Lent of 1356, and the dauphin entertained him and all his attendants in his palace, on the 16th April. John, apprized of the circumstance, made a forced march with a hundred lances, and at the moment when the guests of the Duke of Normandy seated themselves at table, he suddenly entered by a postern, rushed to the dining hall, and approaching the King of Navarre, tore him from table, at the same time saying, "Thou knowest, traitor, thou art not worthy to sit down with my son." The Marshal d'Audencham was by the king's side, with a huge sword in his hand, and declared that any one who ventured to move, at whatever he might see, should instantly die. A squire, belonging to Charles, named Colinet Doublet, alone attempted to defend his master, and lifted the knife, which he had used at table, to the king's throat. He was instantly disarmed. The dauphin then threw himself weeping on his father, who sternly repulsed him—and, turning to Count d'Harcourt, he gave him a violent blow between the shoulders, and exclaimed—"Move on, proud traitor! Away to your prison." The King of Navarre and his followers were secured, and that done, the dauphin took his seat at the table with his father. After dinner, D'Harcourt, De Graville, Mabué, and Colinet Doublet, were taken behind the chateau, to a field, called "The field of pardon." No pardon, however, was granted to them; and the four prisoners were instantly decapitated by "the king of rake hells" (ribauds,) a sort of prévôt in the household. Their dead bodies were afterwards hung on a gibbet in Rouen. This spectacle caused great murmurs, and the people could not be reconciled to it, even when John had made himself known as king, and had produced a treaty with the English, signed by D'Harcourt and the King of Navarre. They tumultuously called out that the treaty was a fabrication, and that all that had been done was only to revenge the *gentle* Lacerda. These angry demonstrations checked the fury of John, and he caused the King of Navarre to be removed to a tower in the Louvre, and thence into the prisons of Chatelet. There he was held in continual apprehension of death, as he was given to understand, that it was intended to tie him up in a sack, and throw him into the Seine. John cared not, however, to go quite so far at that time, and other matters soon occurred, which fully occupied his mind.



Charles the Bad taken Prisoner by King John.



All the relations of Charles were not taken in the snare laid for them at Rouen. His brother, Philippe of Navarre, and Geoffrey d'Harcourt, immediately armed their vassals, and sent to the king a challenge, which commenced thus :—"To John de Valois, who writes himself King of France." The Duke of Lancaster came to their aid with a body of troops, and thus strengthened, they were enabled, during the remainder of the season, to withstand the forces of the king.

The attention of John was now called to a new invasion by the English. At the head of two thousand men-at-arms, and six thousand English and Gascon archers, the black prince had formed the daring plan of joining the revolvers of Normandy, and crossing central France. He burnt a number of villages in his march, and at length approached le Perche, where the Duke of Lancaster awaited him, and there he learned that John, having collected his vassals at Chartres, had provided for the defence of all the passes of the Loire. His first idea was to return to Bordeaux, by the way of Touraine and Poitou, laying waste the country as he proceeded ; but twenty thousand men having crossed the Loire to intercept him, this course was no longer open to him. His retreat was cut off ; the enemy, in vastly superior numbers, was close upon him, and arriving at Poitiers on the 17th September, he found that he had no choice but to surrender, or risk a battle. His small army was collected on a plateau called the field of Maupertuis, overgrown with vines and bushes, with no approach to it in front, but through a long narrow lane, enclosed by two of the thick impenetrable hedges, common in that part of the country. The following day being Sunday, the king heard mass in his tent, and took the sacrament with his four sons. Afterwards he held a council of war, and sent Ribeauumont to reconnoitre. John had with him from forty-five to fifty thousand men, formed into three divisions, which his brother, the Duke of Orleans, and the dauphin, commanded with himself. For two leagues between Poitiers and the field of Maupertuis, the ground was covered with banners and knights, hastening to battle for the king. The confidence of the French was on this occasion not less than it had been at Crécy. John passed through the ranks of his army on a white courser, and thus addressed his knights :—"At Paris, at Chartres, at Rouen, and at Orleans, you threatened the English, and wished to have them before you—I will shew them to you now." Ribeauumont soon arrived, and reported that he had seen the English entrenched behind bushes, the cavalry all dismounted, and the horses in the rear of the army—the archers being in front. The road would not permit of more than four men advancing abreast, and the adjoining ground could hardly be approached by infantry. He therefore advised that all the cavalry should fight on foot, with the exception of three hundred men in iron armour, selected as the strongest and boldest of the army, to lead the way, and to make a break in the line of the English archers. The men-at-arms, he suggested, might follow at a little distance, and, after the first shock, advance to finish the battle, by engaging the

English hand to hand. This counsel being approved, the French had already begun to march, when a cavalier, who had just galloped into Poitiers, presented himself before the king, and arrested the forward movement. It was the Pope's legate, the Cardinal Talleyrand de Perigord, who hastened to fulfil a mission of peace, confided to him by the court of Rome. John received the messenger with respect, and consented to grant him four and twenty hours for negociation. The black prince, aware of the extreme peril of his situation, was not indisposed to treat. He declared himself willing to agree to any terms consistent with his own honour and the honour of England; and was content to restore all the booty he had made, and give up the places he had captured, as well as his prisoners, in that and the former campaign; and further bind himself not to serve against France for seven years, if he might be permitted to withdraw unmolested. John, not satisfied with these concessions, demanded that he should surrender himself as a prisoner, with a hundred of his knights, to which the victor of Crécy indignantly replied, that they should neither have him nor his knights, till he captured them sword in hand. All hope of accommodation was at an end; but the day being far advanced, the struggle was, by mutual consent, deferred till the following morning.

During the night the English laboured diligently to strengthen their position, by forming deep ditches in front of their lines. These they enclosed with pallisades, formed of sharp stakes, which the English archers always carried with them. Edward lined the hedges which bounded the road, and he ordered a body of six hundred men-at-arms under the captal de Buche, to make a circuit of some extent, and suddenly fall on the flank of the enemy, while they supposed the whole English army to be in their front. Scarcely had these arrangements been made, when the three hundred French knights entered the lane at a gallop, with two field marshals at their head. A shower of arrows, from an unseen foe, came upon them through the hedges, killed many, and threw the whole into great confusion. The horses became restive, ran against one another, and many of their riders were trampled under foot. Thus discomfited, the knights fell back on the division commanded by the Duke of Normandy, and before the embarrassment caused by this miscarriage had subsided, the force, under De Buche, attacked the flank of the division, headed by the dauphin, while the English cavalry, previously dismounted, resumed their horses, and furiously rushing through the road, over the dead and wounded men and horses that encumbered it, attacked on the other side, with loud cries of "St. George and Guienne." The dauphin, a feeble youth of twenty, lost all presence of mind at this double assault. Little accustomed to war, he instantly gave way before the impetuous foe, and fled, with eight hundred men, by the way of Chauvigny. The Duke of Orleans, influenced by such an example, also fell back. On observing this, Chandos, a celebrated English captain, exclaimed,—“The day is ours; let us secure the King of France, for he is brave, and still maintains his ground.” “Forward then,”

shouted the black prince, in reply ; and the force of the whole English army was directed to that part of the field where John continued the fight. A body of German horse sustained the shock of the charge now made, but they could not long stand before the fury of the English, already animated by the confidence of victory ; and, in a short time, John remained almost alone, being only attended by the knights of the new order of "The Star," which he had founded ; all of whom fought through this eventful day, and fell faithful to their oath. The ranks of these brave men were rapidly thinned, and at length they found themselves separated into ten small bands, which were severally annihilated, one after another. The King of France fiercely endeavoured to prolong the struggle, as did his youngest son, Philippe de Tournay, then but fourteen years of age, who that day gained the surname of "the bold," and had the honour, not fewer than three or four times, to save his father's life. John remained exposed to great peril, though the English were anxious to take him alive. His strength began to fail ; his face was covered with blood, and all who were near him called on him to surrender ; but, obstinate as before, he fought on, till the sire de Charni, the bearer of the oriflamme, falling at his feet, the monarch at length recognised the hopeless nature of the combat in which he was engaged, and called out,—



"Where is my cousin, the Prince of Wales?" and seemed reluctant to surrender to any one of meaner rank. Edward, however, being at a distant part of the field, his submission was at length received, and that of his son,

by Denis de Morbec, a knight of Arras, who had fled from his own country, in consequence of being charged with murder.

The personal danger of the monarch was not yet at an end. Both the English and their Gascon allies aspired to the honour of making him their prisoner ; and some of the rude spirits engaged in this contention, threatened to bring it to a termination, by instantly putting both the royal captives to death. Happily for John, at this moment the Earl of Warwick and Sir Reginald Cobham, sent by the black prince to ascertain the fate of the French king, arrived. Their authority overruled the pretensions of both parties, and by the earl treated with every respect, he was forthwith conducted to the tent of the conqueror.

" Here," says Hume, " commences the truly admirable heroism of Edward ; for victories are vulgar things, in comparison with that moderation and humanity displayed by a prince twenty-seven years of age, not yet cooled from the fury of battle, and elated by as extraordinary and as unexpected success as had ever crowned the arms of any commander." John knew how to bear this afflicting reverse with an air of magnanimity, and Edward praised his prowess, and by every soothing representation of the strange and unforeseen vicissitudes of war, endeavoured to reconcile him to his situation. John declared, on his part, that he was in a great degree consoled for his misfortune, by the reflection that he had only been vanquished by a prince so valiant, and so eminently distinguished for greatness of soul, as Edward. At a repast, which was prepared for the French king, Edward served as if he had been one of his attendants, and when desired to take a seat, declined doing so, in the presence of the majesty of France. At this moment, the claim of his father to the crown which John wore, was wholly forgotten, and every honour rendered to the captive king that refined courtesy could offer. The French, who witnessed the noble and generous conduct of the English prince, it is said, were more affected by it than by the loss of the battle, and to have been unable to refrain from tears.

Edward carried his prisoners to Bordeaux, and thence, a truce for two years having been concluded, sailed for England. He landed on the 24th May, at Southwark, and was received with enthusiastic acclamations by the populace, who flocked in countless thousands, to gaze on the extraordinary spectacle of a King of France passing through London a prisoner. The prince here, as in France, was most sedulous, only to distinguish himself by his unassuming deportment, and his earnest desire to shew his royal prisoner every attention that could in any way mitigate the bitterness of that cup, from which adverse fortune compelled him so largely to drink. He was magnificently attired, and mounted on a large white steed, distinguished for its beauty ; while the conqueror, in his black armour, riding on a poney, came behind. The king met the cavalcade, and gave the French monarch and his son a most cordial greeting. Both were lodged in Windsor castle, where all that royal hospitality could offer to guests so illustrious, was duly supplied.

Less respect was shewn to royalty in France after this disaster. The dauphin, having fled from the battle field, convoked the states of the kingdom, and prepared to assume the sovereignty in the absence of his father. The assembly, however, before so impracticable with John, were still more presuming towards the runaway from Poitiers. Before listening to him, they demanded the liberation of the King of Navarre, whose name, they considered, would serve as a rallying point in the great struggle for which they were preparing; and they further required the imprisonment of seven of the principal members of the royal council. They wished a council of regency to be formed of their own choice, to consist of four prelates, twelve nobles, and twelve citizens. These concessions made, they were willing to grant a supply of thirty thousand men for one year. To agree to such terms the dauphin judged was to abdicate before assuming power. He broke up the assembly, and during the Christmas holidays visited the emperor, Charles IV., his maternal uncle. From him, however, no assistance could be obtained; and, returning to Paris, the dauphin endeavoured to find a resource, by tampering with the money, as his father had done. This attempt failed. It was opposed by Stephen Marcel, in the name of the trades, and when the depreciated coin was offered in payment for commodities, no one would receive it. He met the regent at St. Germain d'Auxerrois, at the head of an armed multitude, whom he had induced to revolt; and, having defended the course he had taken, at the close of their interview, he sent orders to the several trades instantly to suspend their labour, and to appear at a place which he indicated, under the banners of their several corporations. Charles was compelled to yield. He called in the new money, dismissed the counsellors proscribed by the states general, and convoked that body anew to meet on the 5th February, 1357.

On their assembling, new pretensions were advanced, and new victims were claimed. Treasurers, king's advocates, in short all who approached the regent, down to his valet de chambre, were to be sacrificed to their resentments. To appease their rage, the bishop of Laon, Robert le Coq, speaking in the name of the clergy, demanded nothing less than a suspension, at once, of all the officers of the kingdom, till a commission should have enquired into their cases, and pronounced judgment on their conduct. The author of the audacious proposition, formerly an advocate and counsellor to Philippe de Valois, and had become at once bishop of Laon and president of the parliament. He led the clergy in their opposition; and John de Pecquigny, a baron of Picardy, headed the noblesse—forming, with Stephen Marcel at the head of the trades, a triumvirate which was the depository of all the real power of the kingdom. The remonstrances they made to the dauphin in 1357, would almost make the reader imagine himself engaged with the proceeding of the states general in 1789. They told the dauphin that their will ought to be regarded by him as that of the nation, and claimed of him that he should govern between the sittings of the states, with the assistance

of a council, consisting of thirty-six members, twelve of each order. Other demands, giving them almost unlimited power, were preferred ; and it was only on these terms that they voted him thirty thousand men-at-arms, first making him promise that they should be neither raised nor employed by his people, but by good men, wise, loyal, and responsible—and appointed by the three estates. New money was to be coined, in conformity with the views of the prévôt of the merchants of Paris. No other change was to be permitted, and in this manner the administration of the finances of the country was withdrawn from the king.

Numerous violent innovations were made, and put forward as reforms. Charges were multiplied against various important bodies in the state. It was declared among other things, that the chambers ought to hold their sittings at sunrise, and those members who were not present at an early hour, should lose their wages for the day. The dauphin had no means of resisting these encroachments. He signed the ordinance submitted to him, and permitted the council of thirty-six to reign. The re-action was violent. At Paris, the public tribunals were closed many days for want of judges. Only two of the officers of parliament were retained by the council ; they broke up the chamber of accounts, the council of the king was entirely changed, and each deputy was allowed an escort of six men-at-arms. A little army was thus formed, in the immediate interest of the council of thirty-six. There was but one point on which the dauphin did not give way—the liberation of the King of Navarre, and on that the council did not think it prudent to insist.

John was at Bordeaux when news reached him of what was passing at Paris. He immediately concluded a truce for two years with the English, and then sent the counts D'Eu and Tancarville to command the states to stay their proceedings. He assumed that to make known his will was sufficient to arrest their career, but they had gone too far to recede before the impotent menaces of a captive king, and they now declared war against royalty. The gates of the city were closed and guarded ; all the streets were secured by chains and other defences ; ditches were dug in front of the walls, and the towers were provided with throwing machines and cannon. Marcel presided over these doings ; but the noblesse and clergy now felt disposed to draw back from the consequences of the step which they had been induced to take by Robert le Coq and John de Pecquigny. While the abuses of the royal administration were the sole objects of attack, the nobles and the bishops were willing to co-operate with the trades against the common enemy. They returned to royalty, when they found that they themselves were in danger of falling before a furious democracy. Charles used every prudent means to oppose the storm. The proscribed counsellors were by degrees recalled, and growing bolder by degrees, the dauphin declared that "he in future would govern," and broke up the council of thirty-six. But the excitement this step produced in Paris, caused a movement which he could not resist. He

left the capital to seek aid in Normandy and elsewhere, but in vain; and in despair he submitted to return, and put himself under the protection of Marcel, who compelled him to convoke a new meeting of the states, November 7th, 1357.

The triumvirate, finding themselves involved in a personal struggle against royalty, now resolved to invoke the aid of the King of Navarre. The day after the states commenced their sittings, John de Pecquigny went to the chateau of Palluel, the last prison of Charles the Bad, accompanied by a crowd of the inhabitants of Amiens. He scaled the walls, and imposed upon the governor, Tristan du Bois, by means of false documents, and succeeded in withdrawing his prisoner, before Du Bois had time to discover the cheat. Charles then harangued the people in the halls of Amiens, and with such



pathetic eloquence, that his speeches caused them to shed tears. He took up his lodging with a simple canon, and there received the citizens. In the meantime, Marcel and Robert le Coq had compelled the dauphin to sign a permission for the King of Navarre to proceed to Paris, without any restriction as to his attendants. He arrived there on the 29th December, escorted by a body of armed citizens from Amiens and other cities. At St. Denis the trades came out to meet him, with Marcel and the bishop of Paris, John de Meulane, at their head, and conducted him with great ceremony to St. Germain-des-Prés, the residence of Robert le Coq. The next morning ten thousand citizens assembled in the Pré-aux-Clercs, to hear their favourite

speak ; and he gratified the crowd by haranguing them from a scaffold by the abbey wall. His appearance gave the last demolishing blow to the power of the dauphin. They met for the first time at the hotel of the queen Jane, and the escort of the King of Navarre caused that of the son of King John to give way ; the latter quietly submitted to the affront. Charles then demanded the restitution of all the places taken from him in Normandy, the restoration of the representatives of those who had been executed in the chateau of Rouen, and a large sum of money for other injuries of which he complained. Helpless as he was, the dauphin hesitated to comply with exactions like these ; but was told by Marcel, "Sir, you had better grant with a good grace what the King of Navarre requires, for it must be so." Upon this he submitted ; and Charles the Bad, exulting in his victory, proceeded to Normandy, there to enjoy new ovations. He reached Rouen January 10th, 1358. The first step he took was to order the remains of his friends who were executed, to be removed from the gallows on which till then they had been suspended ; and they now received a magnificent funeral, at which the corporations, marching under their respective banners, attended. The King of Navarre was present, mounted on his war horse ; and on the following day he addressed the people in the square near the church, and delivered at once a funeral oration, a political harangue, and a sermon. He took for his text the following verse from the Psalms : "Those who were attached to me were innocent and pure of heart." As usual, his eloquence affected the people to tears. In the afternoon, he dined familiarly with the citizens, the mayor, a wine merchant, being seated at his right hand.

Finding the adversary so dangerous, the dauphin, however repugnant to his feelings, decided on fighting him with his own weapons ; and addressed the people in public places, complaining of those who had assumed the reins of government. To counteract the effect of this appeal, Marcel promptly convened a great meeting at the Hospital de St. Jacques. The dauphin attended it ; but when there, his resolution failed him, and he desired his chancellor to speak for him. Scarcely had he done so, when a great tumult broke out in the crowd, and the dauphin, who was unfitted to act a part in such a scene, hastily withdrew, leaving the field to the citizens. As he found from experience that he gained nothing by treading in the steps of the revolvers, he now thought only of collecting an armed force. Already two thousand men-at-arms were assembled near St. Cloud, and the dauphin, who grew bold as the numbers increased, eluded, from day to day, the execution of his forced engagements with the King of Navarre. Some of the deputations sent from the malcontents to the dauphin were not well received, and they withdrew threatening vengeance. Marcel, upon hearing their complaints, consulted with his associates on the best means of defending the *Republic*, as they termed it ; and it was deliberately resolved, that it had become absolutely necessary to put to death some of the counsellors of the regent, On Thursday, the 23rd of February, the tocsin was sounded at Nôtre Dame,

and the citizens assembled in arms opposite the front of the palace, wearing red and blue favours, inscribed "*a bonne fin*" (a good end). The advocate, Regnault d'Acy, who happened to pass, was their first victim. He was pursued into a pastry-cook's shop, and there fell, covered with wounds, not having been permitted to utter a word. The murderers then rushed tumultuously up the great staircase of the palace, and bursting into the dauphin's chamber, "Sire duke," cried Marcel, "do not disturb yourself about what you see, for these doings are very necessary." Then turning to his followers, he called to them, "Do quickly that which has brought you here." His companions, upon this, drew their swords, rushed on De Conflans, Marshal of Champagne, a nobleman of high birth, and one of the privy counsellors of the dauphin, and killed him near the bed of the prince, whose robe was stained with his minister's blood. Others attacked Robert de Clermont, Marshal of Normandy, a man of known valour, but who, being unarmed, sought to save himself by retreating to an adjoining chamber, where, however, he was promptly followed, and mercilessly slaughtered.

All the attendants of the dauphin being now dispersed, he remaining alone, covered with the blood of a faithful servant, surrounded by a ferocious mob, already excited by the perpetration of three murders, he turned to the prévôt of the merchants, and asked for mercy. Marcel, to assure him of safety, gave him his own scarf of red and blue, and took that of the dauphin, which was black, with gold fringe. The dead bodies of De Champagne and De Normandy were dragged to a great marble table in the court of the palace, on which they were publicly exhibited till evening, without any one daring to touch them. Marcel afterwards led the people to the Place de Grève, where he harangued them from a window. "We avow the deed!" was the cry which burst from all parts of the excited crowd, "and we will defend it." Marcel afterwards sent party-coloured chaperons to the palace, or rather red and blue cloth, from which they were to be made, and the parliament and the states hastened to adopt these distinguishing marks of the citizens. More powerful than ever, Marcel now wrote to the cities of the provinces to rally round him. At Laon, Rouen and Amiens, the colours worn at Paris were everywhere displayed. The King of Navarre, in consequence of the new movement, hastened to Paris. At his first interview, Marcel demanded his approbation of the murder of the three counsellors. "My good man! my special friend!" Charles replied, clapping him on the shoulder, "I approve of everything."

The nobles, however, began to arouse themselves. Their ancient privileges were no more, in consequence of the recent enthronization of the citizens, and they lent a ready ear to the invitations they now received from the regent, calling them to his succour. Meetings were named to take place at Senlis, Meaux and Compiègne. The day fixed upon, the 19th March, had arrived, and it had been attempted to get the dauphin away from the citizens, without success. He, however, gained over the captain of the arches of the great

bridge, and a carpenter brought a boat, in which he was enabled to escape by night.



Marcel remained master of Paris ; but Charles, being now sheltered from the movement, and the avowed chief of the noblesse, resumed the exercise of all his royal rights, and resolved to meet his late tyrants by opposing force to force. He convoked the states general to meet at Compiègne. Their removal from Paris was strongly opposed ; and but for the selfish feeling which rendered many of the provincial cities jealous of Paris, the dauphin would never have been able to secure any considerable attendance. Robert le Coq ventured to present himself at Compiègne. The nobles there were disposed to put him to death for his presumption ; and he hastily fled to Paris, where the King of Navarre had just been named captain general of the kingdom. The soldiers of the regent and the citizens soon came to blows, on the side of Meaux and Melun. The former had already seized on Corbeil, and established a bridge, by means of which he commanded both banks of the Seine, and cut off the supplies of Paris. The prévôt of the merchants, upon this, marched at the head of a body of soldiers and citizens to Corbeil, drove out the regent's troops, and destroyed the bridge. After the flight of the dauphin from Paris, he had been busily occupied in putting the capital into a good state of defence. Four thousand men laboured incessantly, digging ditches, closing some of the gates, pulling down houses, and removing gardens contiguous to the ramparts. Great iron chains had been thrown across the Seine, and all the artillery found at the Louvre was

ranged at the Place de Grève. The Republic was ready to combat the noblesse, when the attention of both parties was called to an unexpected movement—an insurrection after the manner of the ancient pastoral irruptions, but marked by even more violence.

The vice of the revolution, attempted by Marcel and his companions, was, that it was made in favour of the citizens only, without taking any more account of the people in the country than it did of the knights. It was, in fact, one aristocracy substituted for another—a shop aristocracy, not less proud of its counters and its party-coloured chaperons, or hoods, than the former were of their heraldic honours and their castles. The serfs of the country resolved to take advantage of the disorganization which had extended from Paris to the provinces, and to emancipate themselves. The struggle was more brutal and more fatal than that effected by the citizens, who, less warlike, had a horror of bloodshed.

Since the battle of Poitiers, the country between the Loire and the Somme had been the theatre of the most frightful ravages, committed by bands of mercenaries, who had fought on either side, and who, after the truce concluded by John, had been thrown destitute idlers on central France. During the anarchy which appalled the capital, they carried on an atrocious war, without object and without end. The unfortunate peasants could not resist the force of "the companies," or "companionship," that was the name given to the marauders, but shut themselves up in their churches, and attempted to defend their villages by surrounding them with ditches. On the banks of the Loire, they took refuge during the night with their flocks in boats, which were moored in the middle of the river. In certain cantons of Picardy, the whole population remained concealed at the bottom of subterranean excavations, which had been made in ancient times. The desperadoes forming "the companies" called themselves English and Navarrese; but, in truth, it was difficult to say to what nation they mainly belonged, as they united the lawless and the desperate of all countries. The inferior gentry of the neighbouring states recruited their ranks. Their trade was the only one to which the cadets of a noble house could turn, as by that they were not excluded from chivalry, but were admitted to tournaments, and even received at court! The labourers who enlisted among them became, in a manner, nobles, from the moment the helmet was assumed, and the lance placed within their grasp. When, at length, the intolerable evils to which the peasants had been subjected caused them to revolt, their cry of war was "Death to the nobles!" Their vengeance was especially directed against that class.

On the 28th May, 1358, a multitude of peasants, in the environs of Clermont and Beauvoisis, resolved on a sudden to exterminate the whole of the nobility. A hundred of them or more ran to the house of a neighbouring knight, armed with knives and iron bars. They killed the knight, his wife, and his children, and burnt his dwelling. Another knight's abode was visited in

a like manner, and from that they proceeded to a third. The signal given, hatred long restrained burst out at once in all directions with devastating fury. Malcontents came from every neighbouring place, to join the insurgents at Beauvoisis, who had placed a sturdy peasant at their head, named Karlot, and recognised him as their chief under the name of Jacques Bonhomme. That was the *soubriquet* which had been given to the peasant in derision of his patient endurance ; it was now retained in mockery when he sought vengeance. In a few days, Jacques found himself at the head of a formidable army, which spread itself over the plains of Picardy and La Brie, killing, burning, outraging noble ladies, and spitting their helpless children. When these rustic revolvers had seized on a castle, they dressed themselves and their women in the attire of the owners, and jocularly



saluted each other by the names of the lords, gentlemen and ladies, whose property they had invaded. The alarm created in the aristocratical race was immense. Forgetting all political rivalry, the English and French united to fall on a horde of these desperadoes, who had spread death and misery on the borders of the l'Oise and of the Marne, and were then advancing behind some rags of red and blue cloth, which they displayed as their banners. The King of Navarre, and Pecquigny himself, who had had the day before two of his relations killed by Jacques, took arms against them. Their party, however, secretly applauded the revolt. Though frightened at the massacres they had perpetrated, the citizens saw with pain that means

were taken effectually to reduce this savage class, from whom neither peace nor truce could be hoped. At Senlis, the citizens made common cause with the followers of Jacques. Paris hesitated a moment, but the war with the dauphin pressed, and the Parisians assisted Jacques to seize on D'Ermenonville, whose garrison had given them much annoyance. A conspiracy was soon discovered to deliver up the town to the troops of the regent. The King of Navarre seemed undecided between his political friendships and his affection for the rioters. He went towards the dauphin, who sought to win him over by professions. Marcel treated eventually with Karlot, who prepared to march upon Meaux, and sent to him twelve hundred men under the command of Pierre Gilles, a grocer in the street of the Lombards. On the issue of this expedition depended almost the success of that revolution, which the people of the cities and those of the provinces attempted, each after their own fashion.

More than three hundred ladies, and a still greater number of nobles of the court, were shut up with a handful of knights in the market-place of



Meaux, in the middle of a sort of island, formed by the Marne and the canal of Cornillon, which the dauphin had caused to be surrounded by walls. The citizens were impatient to be relieved from the guests thus forced upon them. Already the red and blue banners approached the town; nine thousand peasants followed them; their axes and their plough-shares set in handles and carried like pikes. Happily for the ladies, the Captal de Buche and Gaston Phœbus, Count de Foix, had set out, to march to their assistance one day

before the arrival of Karlot. They were coming from the Prussian crusade, a crusade which had been silently carried on for more than two centuries, when they learned at Chalons that a new population had been crowded into the market-place of Meaux, and the fate with which the captives were menaced. Without calculating the danger, the captal, who was English, and the count, who was rather Spanish than French, hastened generously to Meaux with sixty lances, which followed them from Prussia. This was the ruin of Jacques and his companions. The citizens had received them with open arms, and set out tables for their entertainment in the public streets. They were rushing on to the market-place, when the captal and Gaston Phœbus forced the gates, and darted forward with their small troop formed in good order, and fell on the crowd of ill-armed rabble with such energy and effect, that they were instantly overthrown one over the other, and great heaps of slain were presently formed of their bodies. Weary of killing them, the men-at-arms drove the defeated crowd into the Marne, and in this manner seven thousand lost their lives. The carnage commenced with them was extended to the citizens, their allies. Having fired the city, the conquerors, with their lances, forced back the inhabitants, who attempted flight, into the flames. The mayor, John Soulas, who had opened the gates to the peasants, was taken and hanged. This occurred on the 9th June, and from that day the courage of the noblesse returned ;—they eagerly rallied round the standard of the regent, and now commenced a war of extermination against the serfs, which was marked by cruelties even greater than those it was proposed to revenge. More than twenty-nine thousand of them were massacred, and still the thirst for blood of the gentry was not slaked. Karlot sought protection from the King of Navarre, but he would not suffer his love of popularity to carry him so far as to accord it. He allowed the wretched king of the mob to come to him, and then crowned him with a red hot iron tripod, and attacked the remnant of his party, of whom he destroyed more than three thousand, near Montdidier. It was resolved to make the inhabitants of Senlis expiate their connection with the peasants. But this was no easy task. When a troop of knights entered the great street, they were assailed by the inhabitants, who drove against them a long train of carriages, while the women assisted by throwing boiling water and hot pitch upon them from the windows, and compelled a retreat.

This slight reverse did not change the general aspect of affairs. The Jacqueses annihilated, Marcel alone remained to oppose the dauphin. Royalty was no longer in danger ; and the question now was whether the chivalrous order would or would not maintain itself at the head of society ? The knights of various countries came to the assistance of the chivalry of France, and the regent soon found an army of thirty thousand men under his command on the heights of Charenton. He cut off all communication with Paris by the upper Seine and the Marne, while his troops burned the surrounding villages. The capital, threatened with famine, was not a little

disturbed, notwithstanding the harangues of its aldermen. In this state of things, the eloquent speaker, the affable companion, the King of Navarre (who was constantly swearing that he would live and die with the Parisians,) opened underhanded negotiations with the dauphin, and treated at the same time with the English. His soldiers, stationed at St. Denis and St. Cloud, rivalled in their pillage of the neighbouring villages the army of the nobles. The dread of famine increased, and with it the popularity of Marcel declined from day to day. He could think of no better resource than to attach himself, under all circumstances, to the King of Navarre. To make his aid more important to Charles, Marcel, with his most intimate friend, the alderman, Pierre Conzac, caused him to be immediately proclaimed captain general of the kingdom, at the Place de Grève, and the English soldiers were brought into the city to defend the walls. The object of the King of Navarre was now seen. He wished Paris to be given up to him, and Marcel had already sent him the city funds, called by him "the pay of the troops;" when a strong party of the citizens, lately so devoted to his cause, was formed against him, headed by Jacques and Simon Maillard, who had till now been his friends. The spirit of the nation broke forth, and it was felt that France might as well have for her master the son of her king as a foreign prince, the friend of the English. Their first step was to excite the people against the English, who, accustomed to live everywhere, as if they were in an enemies' country, pillaged the houses, and did not spare the gardens of the Parisians. The latter assaulted the foreign intruders in the streets, and in spite of the representations of Marcel—the citizens exclaiming it was necessary to kill all the English—forced him to lead them to attack the detachments with the King of Navarre, then cantoned in the Bois de Vincennes. He went with a bad grace to the combat, but his followers could not stand against the warlike and determined rejoinder of those they attacked, who drove them back to the Rue St. Honoré, killing six hundred by the way. This gave the finishing blow to the popularity of the prévôt. The cry of treason was raised against him; and deserted by the citizens and repulsed by the regent, who desired his death, Marcel gave himself up entirely to the Navarrese, as his last chance. This produced a catastrophe which terminated the struggle of the citizens against royal feudality. In the night of the 31st July, Marcel fled with fifty or sixty men to the Bastille, near the gate of St. Anthony. The King of Navarre waited outside the walls with all his companies, the latter being the same soldiers who had beaten the citizens back from the Bois de Boulogne. All was arranged before hand. Charles, when master of the city, was to deliver the prévôt from his enemies, whose houses had already been marked for vengeance. Marcel had promised that he should be instantly proclaimed King of France, when the Maillards arrived, followed by an immense crowd, who had been promenading the halls and the streets, carrying with them the banner of the regent, and shouting the battle cry of "*Mountjoye St. Denis, au roi et au duc.*" The parties soon came to blows.

Marcel, thrown into the donjon of the Bastille, called out, "Come to me, my good friends of the city." Maillard instantly split his head with a blow from an axe. Thus fell Marcel. He had ventured to play the part of Arteville, and, like Arteville, he perished by the hands of his friends!

The next day the red and blue chaperons had disappeared. A messenger was immediately despatched to Charenton, and the regent made his entry by the gate of St. Anthony, in the evening of the 2nd August. Before the church of St. Martin the dead body of Marcel was pointed out to him, which had been left on the step with the corpses of his aldermen, Giffart John de Lisle, and his faithful adherent Conzac. They had been left there purposely, that the dauphin might see them as he passed, and were afterwards thrown



into the Seine. The spirit by which they had been animated still survived. In one street, as the dauphin advanced with his cortege, a man of low appearance did not scruple to say to him—"By God, sire, if I had been believed, you would not have entered here; but after all it will do but little for you." The Count de Tancarville wished to kill the speaker, but Charles restrained him, and replied to the citizen—"Oh, in that we cannot believe you, good sir." Under a gentle aspect, the son of John concealed cruel thoughts of vengeance. Executions suited his cold policy better than murder in the open street, which would excite more hatred, and inspire less terror. These were commenced without loss of time. Pierre Gilles, the grocer, was beheaded in the hall. Two advocates and ten counsellors of parliament shared the same

fate a few days afterwards, and their remains were cast into the river. Each succeeding day beheld new victims fall, and new confiscations made to swell the royal treasury. This was carried so far, that at length the advisers of the regent feared to continue in the same course; and the King of Navarre, who remained in the neighbourhood, called the attention of the regent to other matters. He then assembled the people, and declared that he pardoned all the past; but, notwithstanding this conciliating assurance, he deprived the Parisian communes of their municipal privileges, and reserved to himself the nomination of their prévôt, their aldermen, and their captains of departments. The grace thus shewn to those who had been engaged in the late revolt, did not go so far as to save them from being imprisoned or hanged on the slightest ground of suspicion.

The party of Marcel had still a representative in Charles the Bad. John de Pecquigny commanded his troops in Picardy. He had given an asylum in his states to Robert le Coq, who had become bishop of Calahorra, in Navarre. The provincial citizens were almost everywhere in his favour. At Amiens it was attempted to give up the city, and Pecquigny already occupied half of it, when the Count de St. Pol arrived with a body of men, and drove the Navarrese out. At Laon a like attempt was made with a similar result, which the executioner requited with dreadful severity. The cause of the citizens was lost; and perceiving this, the King of Navarre now openly prepared to treat with the English—who, the truce being expired, were ready to renew the war. Imperfectly recovered as royalty was from the shock it had lately received, the dauphin cared not to encounter two such powerful enemies at the same time. He therefore made overtures to Charles the Bad, and an arrangement was effected, by which his possessions in Normandy were secured to him, and he withdrew his troops from the neighbourhood of Paris and from Picardy [1359].

While these events were progressing, King John, indulging in the joyous chase and the pompous entertainments given in Windsor castle, manifested no great anxiety to return to the Louvre, that he might contend for the prize of eloquence in the halls of the citizens, with Marcel or Conzac. Now all was over, and the part of king was one which it was safe and glorious to sustain, he was eager to see the end of his captivity. To effect this, he consented to give all that Edward required:—the sovereignty of Normandy, Guienne, Poitou, Maine, Touraine, and Anjou, with their dependencies; and more than that, four millions of golden crowns, for the ransom of himself, the princes, and the suzerainty of Britany. This strange pact was forwarded to Paris, already signed by the king, who sent it purely as a matter of form, that the states might ratify it. Scarcely had the king's advocate, William Dormans, read it from the marble table in the hall, when a loud murmur was heard on all sides—"That it was better the king should remain in England, than that such terms should be approved." The dauphin, taking advantage of the enthusiasm of the moment, immediately rejected the treaty on his own

personal authority, and at once demanded and obtained a considerable supply to carry on the war, a renewal of which was now inevitable.

The fate of this proposition was decided May 23rd, 1359. When made known to John, he was so imperfectly acquainted with the state of public opinion, that he considered it had been opposed by the dauphin only to please the King of Navarre. Edward took a different view of the matter; and finding that the sacred person of the king was not so precious in the eyes of the French, as to incline them to give for its restoration one third of France, he determined to take the ransom claimed by force of arms. He accordingly passed over to Calais, and as the dauphin was not prepared with a sufficient force to meet him, the English army ravaged the open country, and no bounds were set to the pretensions of the king. Marching to Rheims, he there wished to be crowned King of France, but was so vigorously resisted by the citizens, that he lost six weeks before the place to no purpose. But since the battle of Poitiers, the warlike genius of the nation seemed in most places extinct. The Burgundians and others paid large sums of money to induce Edward to avoid them in his route; and thus aided on his march, he soon arrived under the walls of Paris, in the plains of Mont Rouge and Gentilly, where, to induce the regent to give him battle, he visited all the country round with fire and sword [April 7th, 1360]. Charles replied to this only by firing himself the burghs of St. Marcel and St. Germain, and the cabins which surrounded Nôtre Dame des Champs, to prevent the English from finding quarters there. Too weak to attempt carrying so great a city by assault, and unable to attempt its reduction by famine, surrounded as he was by lands which he himself had rendered desolate and exhausted in his previous campaigns, Edward withdrew at the end of five days, and retired towards the Loire, announcing that he would return in time for the vintage. Though weary of his expedition, in a negotiation which was attempted, under the mediation of the bishop of Têrouanne and the Abbe de Cluny, whom the Pope had deputed to interfere, it was found that the King of England would abate nothing of the demands which he had previously advanced.

While the important question was still debated, Froissart relates that a dreadful tempest assailed the English camp in a most extraordinary manner. Tents were overthrown—the hail-stones struck men and horses to the earth—and torrents of rain carried away part of the baggage and material. Edward, being then at a little village in Britany, in the environs of Chartres, seems to have felt a degree of alarm at beholding the war of the elements, which he had never known in battle. A superstitious fear is said to have come over him; he believed himself to be pursued by celestial vengeance; and turning towards the towers of the Nôtre Dame of Chartres, he made a solemn vow to Heaven, that he would earnestly apply himself to put an end to the disasters which he had heaped upon France. It is added that the storm had nearly ruined his army, and he could no longer hope to prevail over an enemy who knew so well how to husband his resources. Certain it

is that in seven days he concluded a treaty with the envoys of Charles, who had followed him to Britany. He, however, secured for himself conditions



sufficiently advantageous, notwithstanding his vow. Guienne, Poitou, l'Angoumois, le Limousin, la Saintonge, and the little provinces dependant on them in the Cevennes and the Pyrenees, were ceded. In the north the possession of Calais was confirmed to him, with other territorial advantages; and three thousand crowns in gold were paid for the ransom of John, who consented to leave as hostages in the hands of the English, his two sons, the Dukes of Anjou and Berry [May 8th, 1360].

Two months afterwards, on the 8th July, John, landing at Calais, terminated an interregnum which had been so fruitful of varied misfortunes. The Parisians raised triumphal arches of foliage, in honour of his liberation, and he was carried to the Louvre on a dais of cloth of gold. The delight inspired by his presence was, however, of very short duration. It was soon necessary to pay the ransom, and to give up the provinces claimed by the English.

The Gascon lords refused to ratify the treaty, and the citizens of Rochelle declared that they would rather be deprived of half their goods than be left in the hands of the English. France had never fallen so low. Such was the want of bullion after the first instalment had been paid, that it was necessary to use for money pieces of leather, with a small stud of silver in the centre. No silver remained for the king's table, and the city of Paris was obliged to take upon itself to furnish him with a new supply of plate.

As after the battle of Poitiers, the disorderly spirits no longer engaged in legitimate war, now overran many provinces of France. In Burgundy especially, the "grand company" comprehended twelve or fifteen thousand men, of all conditions, and of all countries. They called themselves "the friends of God, and the enemies of all the world." From Burgundy they extended their ravages to the south, on the side of Lyons, and threatened the rich cities of Provence and Languedoc. John wished to be relieved from such a scourge at any price, and sent against them his cousin, Jacques de Bourbon, Count de la Marche, who collected for the expedition all the chivalry of Auvergne, Provence, and Dauphiny. He attacked the grand company, April 6th, 1362, on the banks of the little river of Brignais, three leagues from Lyons; but he had to do with those who were well skilled in the art of war, and who succeeded in drawing the knights on to ground in which they had prepared deep ditches; and while they were striving against the difficulties thus thrown in their way, a powerful body came on them from behind the neighbouring mountains, and threw them into irremediable disorder.



Jacques de Bourbon, mortally wounded in the contest, was carried to Lyons, where three days after he expired. His son, Pierre de Bourbon, met with the same fate. The Counts De Forez, De Chalons, and De Beaujeu were left dead on the field, with the flower of the nobility of the country. More

than a hundred knights fell into the hands of the enemy, who from that time ravaged at their pleasure the surrounding country. A Gascon captain, Seguin de Badefol, established himself in the little fortress of Anse, whence he levied contributions on Lyons, Nevers, and Maçon. His associates passed into Dauphiny, and took up a position near Avignon, where the popes and their cardinals had established their delightful villas, and where they will again be found in the succeeding reign.

John appeared indifferent to the evils which the country had to deplore, and was wholly employed in gaining money by every means he could devise. The Jews, driven out of France by his predecessor, on the payment of large sums, he permitted to return, and to establish themselves as traders for a period of twenty years. The Duke of Milan, Galéas Visconte, one of those who at that time founded dynasties in Italy, with a handful of mercenaries, aspired to a royal alliance for his son, John Galéas. This was, in France, the first of those alliances with Italian families, which, at a later period, were to lead to changes so important in the affairs of the kingdom. The proposed alliance was unpopular, and caused great murmurs at court; but the duke offered John six hundred thousand florins in gold, and John gave to Pierre Galéas his daughter Isabella. Afterwards he visited the Pope at Avignon; and always forgetful of the present, occupied himself in planning a crusade with his knights, to please the King of Cyprus, Pierre de Lusignan, who passed through Europe, endeavouring to revive, for his own profit, the romantic traditions of bye-gone ages. Priests were sent to different parts of the kingdom to preach up a new crusade, as in the times of St. Bernard and Foulques de Neuilly, but events opposed the fruition of this hair-brained scheme.

Fortune, in some instances, favoured John. At the moment when the cession of Britany made so considerable an invasion in the royal domain, the duchy of Burgundy, which returned to the crown by the extinction of the old ducal family, repaired the loss. He had not yet taken possession, before he bestowed it on his favourite son, Philippe le Hardi, who alone had defended his life on the field of Poitiers, and by this ill-timed grant he prepared for his successors much embarrassment and danger. The ancient house of Burgundy had been pacific, submissive, and generally favourable to the royal cause. Such was not the case with that which was to replace it.

It was mainly with a view to his own enjoyment, that John shortly afterwards decided on that step which was to terminate his reign, by returning to captivity in England, to take the place of his son, the Duke of Anjou, who had effected his escape. The words of John on this occasion, "If honour were banished from the rest of the world, it ought still to find an asylum in the hearts of kings," have been the theme of boundless admiration. It was a fine speech, if it be regarded as the sentiment of a noble mind, prepared to apply it to all circumstances; but it is too little in accord with the general conduct of the monarch from whom it emanated, to be regarded as other than

a mere chivalrous sally. Scarcely had he reached the shores of England, than the fêtes and grand entertainments which marked his former residence in that country, were re-commenced, in honour of his return. Within four months, however, he was snatched from the midst of luxurious enjoyment by death, April 8th, 1364; and the event, as père Daniel remarks, "was no great loss for France."

Properly speaking, it was not a new reign which now commenced. He who ascended the throne had served a sufficiently hard apprenticeship to it, in the four difficult years which preceded the event. He was prepared to assume the crown, and the nation knew what it had to expect from him. Charles V., when he began to reign, was twenty-seven years of age. The camp life which his father had affected, had no attractions for him. The intrigues of courts, the deliberations of councils, occupied all his thoughts; and his taste for repose was confirmed by a crime. Charles the Bad, wishing to be relieved from the annoyance of a prince who everywhere crossed his path, had endeavoured to get him removed by poison. He was saved by a physician sent to him by the emperor; but when the danger was passed, an ulcer remained which the doctor told him could not be healed, but with risk of life. Had his disposition been more warlike, this would have compelled him to prefer the ermined robe, the emblem of peace at that period; yet his whole reign presents but a series of battles. "Never," said the King of England, speaking of his feeble rival, "never have I seen a king so little addicted to wearing a cuirasse, but so capable of finding me plenty to do." Charles the Sage had the happiness to discover, or rather the skill to discern, a man who could accomplish for him what he could not attempt for himself.

Among the knights of Britany who adhered to Charles de Blois, was one named Klesquin, Claiquin, Clasquin, Glesquin, Glaiequin, Garaquin, or Du Guesclin; for his name was written in all these various ways. He was bold, robust and plain; his head round and his hands large, the type of that race of men-at-arms in the fourteenth century, who made war at once their religion and their trade; adventurers, the forerunners of those soldiers of fortune, which were to furnish generals to the kings of England and France. Still a youth, Du Guesclin was a source of annoyance to his family, from his pugnacious disposition, which every day embroiled him with the little peasants of La Motte Broom, the paternal manor. Springing one morning on a horse belonging to the farm, he went off to Rennes, where his uncle resided. In that city a tournament was soon given, in which he engaged, and broke fifteen lances on one horse, and in borrowed armour. Discovered in the sixteenth course, he soon became an important personage there; and in the quarrel between the De Montforts and the Penthhièvres, which broke out shortly afterwards, he so distinguished himself in the contests to which it gave rise, that his name became celebrated throughout the duchy. After the battle of Poitiers, Du Guesclin went to France, and offered his services to the regent, who accepted them, and employed them against the King of



Du Guesclin.

Navarre. To him the government of Pontorson, a strong fortress in Normandy, was now confided, and there, with a band of his relatives and friends, who followed his fortunes, he heaped exploits upon exploits. Such was the man on whom Charles V. was now to depend.

The moment John set out for England, the King of Navarre renewed hostilities, and Du Guesclin pitted against him, carried by assault his fortresses of Mantes, Rouleboise and Meulan, which gave him the command of the Seine between Paris and Rouen. Charles the Bad, upon this, deemed it expedient to oppose to so formidable a warrior a celebrated captain in the English service, whom he invited from Gascony—the Captal de Buche, John de Grailli, who, landing at Cherbourg with four hundred lances, and being joined by the Navarrese troops, soon found himself at the head of fifteen hundred men. Du Guesclin had with him nearly as many. When two competitors for glory thus met face to face, it was a point of honour for them not long to delay coming to action. Du Guesclin found the captal's army drawn up on the brow of a hill, in the plain of Neuburg. He was so determined to give battle, that, on passing the bridge at l'Arche, he sent his men to get themselves confessed by the cordeliers in the city. But the position of the enemy was too strong to be attacked. After vainly daring him to battle on the open ground, he remained two days encamped on the plain, greatly in want of food, but always full of confidence. Already his men were reduced to subsist on their horses; while the captal, having Evreux behind him, was capable of holding out for a long time. In this situation he mocked the distress of the French, by causing a table to be set forth, as if for their entertainment, at the bottom of the hill, covered with bread, fowls and wine. Du Guesclin began to despair of vanquishing his prudence, and adopted the expedient of feigning a retreat. This caused a great sensation in the captal's camp. De Grailli, suspecting a snare, hesitated; but John Jouel, an English officer, called out aloud, that "if the Navarrese were afraid, he himself would charge the enemy with his single banner." The excitation of the men was such, that the captal could no longer restrain them, and the signal to pursue was given. Du Guesclin had expected this, and now exultingly remarked to Thibaud du Pont, "The net is well spread; we shall have the birds." Scarcely had the Navarrese reached the plain, when suddenly turning about, he marched directly up to them. The captal, who expected on that very day a reinforcement of fifteen hundred lances, made an effort to gain time. He offered the French food, and a more commodious encampment. Du Guesclin replied that he was ready to fight; and the French archers having advanced, poured in a volley of arrows, and the battle became general. It was on the day before that fixed for the coronation of Charles at Rheims. "Forward, my friends," cried Du Guesclin, "the day is ours. Remember, in the name of God, that we have a new King of France, and that to-day his coronation will be honoured by our victory." The captal well sustained the renown he had acquired by the bravery he displayed on this

occasion; but Eustache de la Housaye, having passed behind some hedges with two hundred lances, came suddenly on the rear of his troops, and penetrated their ranks. Approaching the capital, Thibaud du Pont seized on his person, and declared he should instantly be killed if he did not surrender. De Grailli then turned towards Du Guesclin, saying, "Noble sir, I yield to you, since it must be so." The taking of this illustrious chief decided the fate of the battle. Too late to render him assistance, the reinforcement of fifteen hundred men expected by the capital arrived, and were almost annihilated by the conquerors. The news of the victory reached Rheims on the very day that Charles was crowned, and converted the ceremony into a triumph.

After this signal defeat, the King of Navarre was no longer formidable; and having taken several other strong places from the Navarrese in Normandy, Du Guesclin was despatched to Britany, where more important affairs demanded his attention.

Obstinate as they were, the partisans of De Montfort and Penthievre began to grow weary of that atrocious strife, which had continued during twenty-two years, and without either party gaining any decided advantage over the other, had converted all Britany into a battle-field. It was resolved to bring the contest to a close by one great battle. The two armies met on the plains of Beaumanoir; but the intended engagement was postponed at the instance of certain bishops, who undertook to propose terms of accommodation, which they thought ought to satisfy all parties. They suggested that each of the two rivals should bear the title of duke, and wear in their arms *les hermines* (the ermines), a national emblem, which was in the escutcheon of the Duke of Britany what the *fleurs de lis* were in those of France. Each was to have a capital; Nantes was to be that of De Montfort, and Rennes that of Charles le Blois. Charles and the young Duke de Montfort had signed the treaty, and hostages were exchanged, when all was again broken off. The right of Charles to the duchy came but through his wife, Jeanne *le Boiteux*, the niece and heiress of John III. More fierce, or more obstinate than her husband, when he waited on her with the treaty, she expressed great indignation, and declaring that he had engaged to give away what did not belong to him, she vowed she would lose her whole inheritance in war, rather than cede the half of it.

At this juncture, Du Guesclin arrived with a thousand lances under his command. The King of England, to sustain his interest in Britany, had sent a body of men-at-arms to De Montfort's camp; while two hundred archers and two hundred lances, under John Chandos, the famous captain who had commanded at Poitiers, were ordered to march from Guienne to Poitou.

It was on Michaelmas day, 1364, that this long and bloody quarrel was brought to a close. De Montfort had besieged Auray, distant three leagues from Vannes; and the garrison was already reduced to great extremities, when Charles le Blois appeared before the place with from four to five

thousand knights, collected from all parts of Britany and France. He encamped under the walls, by the side of a small stream opposite a meadow, beyond which the enemies' tents were seen. A day was passed in attempts



at negociation ; but Jeanne had made her husband swear that he would make no concession, and the next morning the two armies came to blows. Montfort had wished to seek his rival behind the stream which separated them. Chandos restrained him ; and seeing that he could not disengage himself, Charles le Blois passed the barrier himself. In a few moments the struggle became terrific. The French pressed on Montfort's centre, and his banner was thrown down by Vert, brother to the Count d'Auxerre. Hue de Caurelée, who came up with the reserve, retrieved the miscarriage, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Charles le Blois, who, for a moment, thought that he had gained the day. Perceiving a knight with the *hermines* in his coat of arms, he supposed that it was Montfort, and brought him with a blow from his battle-axe to his feet. "Britany ! Britany ! Montfort is killed !" was then his cry ; but Montfort, who was near, made his exulting rival see that he still lived. It was one of his cousins, whose arms were the same as his own, that had fallen. The Count d'Auxerre, who commanded one wing of the army of Charles, received a wound from a sword in the left eye, through one of the holes of his vizor, and the blood choking him in his casque, he was compelled to surrender. Olivier de Clisson, who led the opposing wing, then put his whole corps to the rout. At the same time, the husband

of Jeanne le Boiteux gave way on his side. Hue de Caurelée, passing with his reserve behind a field of thick furze, came suddenly on the rear. The chief of Penthièvre, surrounded by enemies, fought with the fury of a lion, but in vain. An English soldier, from a defect in his *mentonniere*, or chin armour, passed the point of his sword into his mouth and through his neck, and Charles fell dead on the spot. Du Guesclin remained. Observing the fate of his chief, he exclaimed, "The most sage man of the age is dead." He then dashed into the thickest of the fray, and fought desperately, till his sword and battle-axe were successively broken in his hands. Disarmed, and covered with wounds, he at length surrendered to Chandos.

The loss on the side of the Penthièvres did not exceed three hundred ; but they left on the field the prestige of their cause. Auray, Vannes, and all the cities on that side, surrendered to the conqueror, who saw rally round his standard, a great portion of the lords who had belonged to the opposite faction. It is told that, before the battle, the great greyhound of Charles le Blois, which till then had never quitted him, fled from his side, and ran to



caress the boots of his rival. All parties were now so weary of contention, that the result of this day was popularly regarded as "the judgment of God." The King of France was too prudent not to take advantage of this feeling, to effect a pacification. The arrogant pretensions of Jeanne were no longer regarded ; and on the 12th April, 1365, a treaty was concluded, under which Charles recognised De Montfort as Duke of Britany, and the latter accepted him for his suzerain. Jeanne gave up all the places which remained to her, and received in exchange a rent, or life annuity, of three hundred livres. The duke rendered homage to the king at Paris ; and, in Britany, the question as to the rights of the house of Penthièvre was now set at rest.

The arms of France were then turned against the King of Navarre. At the same time, the Duke of Anjou, governor of Languedoc, signed a treaty at Toulouse with the King of Aragon, who had joined France against the Navarrese. The latter was already at war with Peter the Cruel, King of Castile; and, fearing to be crushed by so many enemies, was glad to withdraw from the struggle. The Captal de Buche, detained prisoner in Paris, negotiated a treaty. Charles insisted on retaining Mantes, Meulan, and the comté de Longueville, which he had presented to Du Guesclin after one of his victories; and the King of Navarre gave up his claims on Burgundy, Champagne and La Brie, in consideration of Montpellier being ceded to him, and the captal, who had been his negotiator, receiving his liberty. The Parisians, who still had a lively recollection of the King of Navarre, received with rejoicings the official news of peace, which was published in the halls on the 20th of June. The former compeer of Marcel presented to the king a heart of gold, in token of sincere reconciliation.

It was to be expected that the troops now disbanded would, as in the late reign, prove dangerous to the country. In the provinces of the east, the "grand companionship" was permanently established; and, in consequence of the recently concluded treaties, its numbers were now swelled to thirty thousand men! They were equal to expeditions which more resembled the wars of kings, than the daring outrages of banditti. Nobles and illustrious captains, such as Hue de Caurelée, the true conqueror of Charles le Blois, placed themselves at the head of these outlaws, and gave them the advantages of discipline and good order. Ancient enemies ranged themselves under the same banner, as if they had only returned from a tournament. They were too powerful to be assailed. The Pope in Avignon was in their power; the emperor was uneasy on their account; and the only means that could be devised for checking the evil, was to revive the idea of a crusade, which had been abandoned on the death of John. In furtherance of this object, the emperor offered half the revenues of his kingdom of Bohemia for three years. The pope granted to the King of France the tenth of all his benefices for two years; and the bishop of Mans was authorised to absolve from their sins all the members of the grand companionship, who should decide upon engaging in this pious enterprise. Already arrangements were making for their passage, with Venice and the King of Hungary, when events occurred to put a stop to the preparations.

Peter the Cruel, King of Castile, had an illegitimate brother, Henry de Transtamare, who had been forced to cross the Pyrenees to escape from his ferocity. He was anxious to induce the grand company to turn their thoughts towards Spain. The King of France favoured this project, having a quarrel of his own to avenge, as Peter, carried away by his passion for Marie de Padilla, had caused his queen, Blanche, sister to the King of France, to be stifled between two mattresses. The pope was induced to declare that Peter had forfeited all claim to the crown, which, in consequence,

was now the right of his brother. The King of Aragon promised supplies of provisions and other aids; and Charles appointed Du Guesclin, a part of whose ransom he had just paid, to command; and he accordingly joined the companions in their camp near Chalons-sur-Saone. He announced to them an offer of 200,000 florins from the king, and pointed out to the daring adventurers, the glory and the benefit to be realised by the conquest of Grenada from the Saracens, after dethroning Peter the Cruel. The pope went further than he had previously done, and offered to grant the desperadoes a general absolution. "If then we wish," said Du Guesclin, "to do good for ourselves, it is better to enter on this work, and doing so to save our souls, than damn ourselves and go to the devil, for too many sins we must all feel we have committed." A treaty was signed. The chiefs of the companionship agreed to place the strong places which they held in the hands of the king; and they proceeded to Paris in disguise, "for fear of the people," where they were magnificently entertained by Charles. Multitudes of nobles and others were eager to follow Du Guesclin. John de Bourbon, though a prince of the blood, did not disdain to accompany him, to avenge the death of Queen Blanche, his cousin. He enrolled himself with the members of the grand companionship; and his example was followed by Andrehen, the marshal of the king.

Du Guesclin gave out that he was marching against the infidels of Grenada, and caused his soldiers to sew large crosses on their coats; this gained them the name of the "white companies." The horde at length moved, and quitted the lands which they had desolated for five years. In passing Avignon, they exacted a last tribute from the pope. Du Guesclin advanced towards Avignon, as he said, to receive the absolution which had been promised to his men. Some leagues from the city, they were met by a cardinal, who wished to speak with the commanders of the expedition. "Willingly," replied an Englishman, to whom he had addressed himself; "but do you bring any money?" The Marshal d'Andrehen followed this up by saying, "We are at the head of a body of men who have done great mischief in France. We are about to lead them against the infidels in Grenada, and we entreat the pope to assist us with 100,000 livres, and absolution." The pontifical envoy, having only promised the latter, "We have people here," said Du Guesclin, "who can manage to do without absolution, but they cannot go on without the money. Let it come as soon as possible, for the longer they remain in this neighbourhood, the worse it will be for you." The pope was disposed to resist. He ordered the gates of Avignon to be closed, and lined the ramparts with the citizens. Du Guesclin having quartered his soldiers in the best houses in the neighbouring villages, the mischief done was so great, that the citizens were soon content to subscribe among themselves the sum required, to put an end to the evil. This was not what Du Guesclin wanted; and he sent the treasure back, desiring that it should be restored to the poor people to

whom it had belonged, at the same time swearing that he would return to Avignon from the other side of the Pyrenees, if in this any fraud were used. In the end, the pope and his cardinals paid the sum demanded out of their own funds, and hastened to send the promised absolution, signed and



sealed, which Du Guesclin carried with him across the Pyrenees a few days afterwards.

Peter the Cruel was so detested in Spain, and the terror inspired by the "companions" and their chief was so great, that Du Guesclin had only to show himself to overthrow the tyrant, who was speedily deserted by all his court. The several cities yielded as the Breton advanced; and he had scarcely reached the banks of the Ebro, when the Castilian nobility came to acknowledge Henry de Transtamare for their king. Peter fled, and the revolution was completed. Henry thought of directing the energies of his followers against the Moors, when an unlooked for change of circumstances compelled him again to become an exile. Peter had, after his dethronement, appealed to Edward the black prince, who, eager for new glory, determined to espouse his cause, deeming him to be a much injured king. He was the friend of the companions; and they had stipulated that they were never to be led against him. He now wrote to them to repair to his standard; and in spite of the entreaties of the king they had just placed on his throne, they complied, and marched for Bordeaux. Du Guesclin, personally attached to the new monarch, who had made him constable and a noble of Spain, saw himself, in consequence of this defection, obliged to seek other soldiers

in France and in Aragon, where he succeeded in getting together four thousand men.

It was eleven years since Prince Edward had been seriously engaged in war; and, anxious to secure fresh laurels, he spared no sacrifice to ensure the success of his present enterprise. Even his gold and silver plate was melted down to cover the expense; and 100,000 francs which Charles V. had just paid on account of the ransom of King John, was disbursed on the same occasion. In February, 1367, he entered the valley of Roncesvalles, with twenty thousand horse, four thousand men-at-arms, and besides a formidable body of infantry. The King of Navarre, deceitful and wavering as usual, from time to time threatened to join each party, but eventually gave assistance to neither. Henry, at the head of thirty thousand men, encountered the black prince at Navarette, a little village on the confines of Biscay, on the 3rd of April, the day before Passion Sunday. Hue de Caurelée and Chandos, who were with the Prince of Wales, routed the left wing and the centre of the Spanish army, commanded by Henry and his brother, the Count de Tello. Henry, reduced to a handful of men, cut his way through a crowd of enemies, sword in hand, and took the road to Aragon, leaving Du Guesclin with the French alone. As at Auray, the Breton fought to the last, but was in the end compelled to yield. Edward gave him in charge to the Captal de Buche, who was formerly his prisoner at Cocherel. Such was the spirit of the times, such the feelings of those accustomed to arms, that, on this occasion, conqueror and conquered, on meeting, cordially embraced, and sat down in the same tent at the same table. Eight thousand men on the side of Henry fell in this battle. The result was neither beneficial to the protector nor the protected. Peter, restored to his throne, proved that he had not gained wisdom from the lesson which he had received. His furious vengeance paved the way for a new revolution in favour of Henry, who soon returned with Du Guesclin ransomed from the English, and was welcomed by the nation. Peter fell by his brother's hand, August, 1368; and Henry was re-seated on the throne, which is still occupied by his posterity.

The conqueror of Navarette was treated shamefully by Peter, the moment he, from the success of his arms, was no longer deemed important. Though victorious, he was ruined by this expedition. He had cautioned Peter on the importance of paying the companions who had been brought over from Henry's interest. Peter promised everything; but when the time for payment came, he drew back from his word, and finally wished the prince to withdraw to Guienne with his undisciplined bands, which he said had brought ruin on the country. Edward, who suffered severely from the heat of the climate, did not deem it prudent to remain longer in the plains of Valladolid, where he was then encamped, and quitted Spain, ravaging the country as he retreated. It was suspected that the Kings of Castile and Navarre had conspired to extirpate him and his army in their passage through the mountains. But this proved a false alarm; nor was such perfidy necessary

to make him regret his vain-glorious intervention in the affairs of Castile. He returned to Bordeaux with an emaciated frame and empty coffers, and suffering from that malady under which he was soon to sink. The black prince paid dearly for the equivocal honour of restoring a tyrant to his throne, who was soon to be driven from it again.

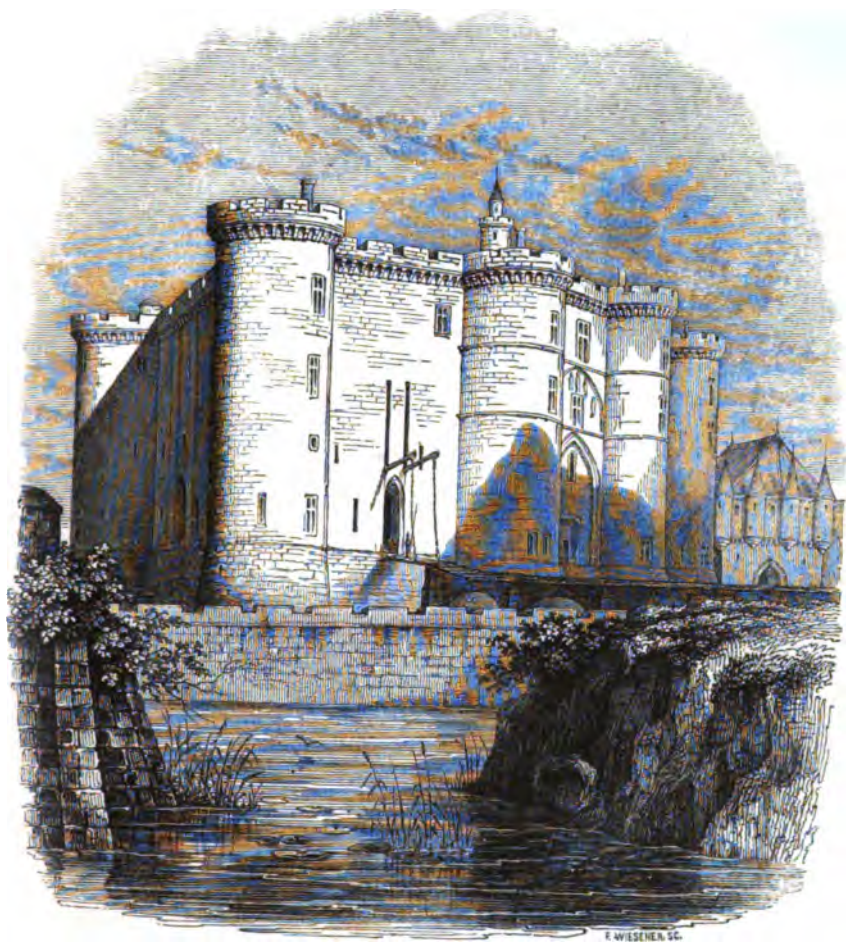
The King of France alone profited from this costly expedition, as it led to the revolt of the English provinces, and enabled France to throw off the yoke imposed by the treaty of Britany. Not knowing where to raise money, in 1368, Edward assembled at Niort the nobles on his domains, and obtained from them an universal capitation tax for five years, which was calculated to produce 1,200,000 livres annually. The Counts of Armagnac and Comminges refused to concur in this scheme, and, with others, appealed for redress to their former master. Charles took a year to deliberate; and, in the mean time, applied himself to ascertain the state of public feeling in Picardy and elsewhere. He found a universal hatred of the black prince and the English; and this emboldened him to conclude a treaty with the Gascon lords, whom he assured of great pensions. Being now prepared to act openly, he cited the prince to appear before his peers at Paris. It was at the end of January, 1369, that Edward saw Bernard Pelot, seneschal of Toulouse, and the chevalier, John de Chappanal, arrive, to serve the citation of the King of France. After throwing themselves on their knees, they begged pardon for what they had to announce. Having listened to their speech, "I will willingly go to Paris," replied the black prince, with an inflamed countenance, "but it shall be with a helmet on my head, and a retinue of sixty thousand men." He allowed the messengers to depart; but they were pursued by some of his attendants, and, on some pretext, committed to prison and put to death.

Notwithstanding his noble courage, the black prince was no longer the dread conqueror he had been, the warrior who had made France and Spain tremble. Worn out by hardships and by pleasures, he now exhibited dropsical symptoms, and was unable to mount his horse. The "companions" who had followed him from Spain, and from whom he had sought to relieve himself during the peace, at the moment when they could be useful, deserted him, and went over to the King of France. His soldiers were defeated by the rebels in Gascony, who brought over to their party all the surrounding cities and the noblesse. From a list preserved of them by Du Tillet, the number of places which made common cause with them exceeded eight hundred. Conquests were so rapidly multiplied, that the English army, which had embarked from Dover, had not yet formed on French ground, when all was nearly ended. Charles now thought it wholly useless to hesitate. He declared the treaty of Britany, though ratified by the late king, was so at variance with the fundamental laws of the kingdom, that it could no longer be observed. He felt that he was the stronger, and feared not to risk a bravado; and calling for a simple valet, he gave him a letter to carry to the

King of England, which letter contained a declaration of war. In the south the English sustained fewer reverses than elsewhere, but they had to lament an irreparable loss in the death of John Chandos. That famous captain was killed at the bridge of Leusac by a French squire, named Jacques St. Martin. He alone could make head against the generals of France with a prospect of success, now the Prince of Wales was no more to be dreaded as a warrior. In Poitou and other places fortresses were taken and retaken, with a loss of life that seems incredible. The governor of La Roche-sur-Yon, John Blondeau, having surrendered too easily to the English, when he rejoined the Duke of Anjou at Angiers, was secured in a sack, and thrown into the Loire.

Charles seemed now resolved to act a bolder part than ever. He ordered a fleet to be fitted out at Harfleur, and prepared to make a descent on England. His brother, Philippe of Burgundy, was to command the invading army. It was just then that the Duke of Lancaster, second son to King Edward, landed at Calais at the head of an English host. Philippe le Hardi watched his motions, but all that passed was a few skirmishes. After an unsuccessful attempt to burn the fleet at Harfleur, the Duke of Lancaster returned to Calais, where he dismissed his troops. The King of England endeavoured, but in vain, to regain his former allies. Of all the German princes that had acted with him against France, the Dukes of Gueldres and Juliers alone declared for him. The Count of Flanders had just married the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy, and nothing could shake his determination to remain neutral. The King of Navarre, though he had been negotiating with Edward, was too cautious to turn against France at a moment like that.

Thus closed the year 1369. Profiting by the popularity he had gained from success, Charles now applied himself to procuring the means for carrying on the war with greater vigour, and for the second time in his reign, convoked the states general at Paris, using every precaution to guard if possible against a renewal of former agitations. The members of 1369 were not elected by the citizens, who might have sent those who had been the rivals and the masters of the dauphin. The list was filled up with officers under the crown, and the *notables* so chosen were not likely to oppose resistance to the royal will. They voted a tax of four livres on each fire in the cities, and of thirty sous on each fire in the villages. Charles also obtained additional imposts on salt and wine. It was at this period that he built the Bastille. The King of Navarre and many nobles, formerly favourable to the English, now retraced their steps. War seemed about to re-commence, and Charles judged it prudent to recall his Breton chief, Du Guesclin, who had tranquilly reposed in Spain, enjoying his good fortune. His presence was necessary, for the tactics of the French dukes, sustained as Philippe "the hardi" was, by the fame he acquired at Poitiers, failed to inspire general confidence. Before leaving the monarch who was indebted to him for his crown, Du Guesclin concluded



The Bastille.



with him, in the name of the King of France, a league offensive and defensive, by which Henry bound himself to keep a fleet off the coasts of Guienne and Poitou.

Charles assembled his peers on the 11th May, and moved them to declare that Edward of England had forfeited Guienne and all his other fiefs. Du Guesclin arrived at Toulouse, and joined by the Duke of Anjou, with two thousand lances and seven thousand infantry, Moissac, Agen and Montpezat opened their gates at his approach. Aguilhon, which in 1346 resisted a hundred thousand men, under John, surrendered at the end of four days. The black prince, depressed by lingering sickness, assembled his troops in all haste, and, informed that Limoges had just been taken by the Duke of Berry, he felt such a furious thirst for revenge on the inhabitants, that, careless of his own life, he desired that he might be borne under the walls of the city in a litter. He caused the foundations to be sapped, carried the place by assault, ordered himself to be carried through the breach in his litter, and still breathing vengeance, ordered three thousand citizens to be put to the sword. This was his last warlike exploit. Immediately afterwards he was removed to Cognac, and the tide of war flowed in another direction.

Robert Knolle, an old English captain, who had played a part in almost all the battles of the last two reigns, was sent to Calais with reinforcements for the prince—comprehending twenty thousand men; and Charles resolved to act on the plan which he had adopted to repel the invasion of 1360, left the country open to the advance of the English, deserted and desolate. The population were sheltered in the fortresses and cities; and Knolle, on his march, saw no enemy but a body of light troops, which kept at a great distance, intercepted his couriers, and otherwise annoyed him; and when pursued, found shelter in some fortified place. The English continued to advance in order of battle to the interior of the kingdom, constantly harassed on the road by an unassailable and almost invisible foe. They burnt the fauxbourg of Arras on their route, and not daring to rest anywhere, continued to move forward till they reached the villages to the south of Paris. There their ravages were redoubled, but Philippe remained unmoved. From the windows of the hotel St. Paul, his knights directed his attention to the flames which rose on all sides. "Let them go on," said he, "with all these burnings they will not be able to destroy my inheritance." Knolle grew tired of this warfare first. He turned his arms against Etamps, destroyed Beauce, and advanced towards Maine and Anjou, where he at length made a pause. At that moment Du Guesclin arrived, who had just had the constable's sword conferred on him by the old sieur de Fiennes. The English reposed on the delicious banks of the Loire after their long fatigues, when Thomas Grantson, who commanded a corps at Pont-Vallain, in Maine, of four thousand men, was informed that the new constable approached. He immediately sent to other portions of the army that they might join him, and despatched a herald to Du Guesclin, to defy him to combat. The herald was

so well treated by the French, that he went to sleep in a state of intoxication ; and Du Guesclin immediately advanced in order to surprise the enemy. He



marched all night through a heavy fall of rain, and at day-break fell on the English with the cries of " Du Guesclin ! Mountjoye ! St. Denis ! " Grantson, though taken unawares, armed his people hastily, and bravely sustained the shock, expecting that Geoffrey Ourcelai, whom he had sent with a force of eight hundred men round the neighbouring hill, with orders to fall upon the rear of the assailants. Du Guesclin, however, while moving forwards, had left the marshal De Blainville to form the stragglers who might come up in order of battle as they arrived. Having made the circuit of the hill, Ourcelai was encountered by Blainville, and instantly routed. The victors hastened to rejoin Du Guesclin. A reinforcement of twelve hundred men, which reached the field while the battle was in progress, could not save Grantson from defeat. Surrounded on all sides, he threw himself on the constable, whom he attempted to bring down with his battle-axe. Du Guesclin seized him by the middle and threw him on the ground. Clisson had already raised his sword to give him the death blow, when he surrendered. This put an end to Knolle's invasion. His other positions were successively taken, and his soldiers killed or dispersed. Of all the formidable army he

had led from Calais, scarcely one hundred men remained with their commander.

This check reduced the English to a state of forced repose, of which the King of France took advantage to secure its continuance, by concluding a truce for two years. Robert Stuart, on his accession to the throne of Scotland, had concluded one with King Edward for nine years; but the sympathies of the Scotch were for the French rather than for the English; and Charles now renewed his former alliance under the treaty of Vincennes [1371], by which a pension of 100,000 gold nobles was secured to Robert; and he engaged to equip and pay a force of one thousand men, five hundred knights, and five hundred foot soldiers. In the month of June the same year, he met the King of Navarre at Rouen, and fixed that uncertain personage by the cession of Montpelier. He had then nothing more to gain in France, and was content to quit the scene, to rest within the limits of his own dominions.

The revolt in Guienne and Poitou continued, and the black prince, in a mournfully declining state, withdrew to pass his last hours in England [1371]. In the following year, King Edward made new efforts to recover what he had lost, and despatched a large armament under the command of the Earl of Pembroke. The Castilian squadron, which Henry de Transtamare had agreed to furnish, under the treaty concluded by Du Guesclin, encountered it off Rochelle. Ambroise Bouchenoire, Rodrique le Roux, and two other celebrated naval captains, commanded the Spanish fleet. After a fierce engagement, the English fleet was dispersed, and Rochelle would have surrendered, but for the opportune arrival of the Captal de Buche. Du Guesclin soon came to collect the fruits of this important victory. Taillebourg and many other cities immediately declared for him; and Rochelle, by an artifice, freed itself from the English garrison, which had been left there; and having secured the governor of the castle, sent him with all his soldiers to Bordeaux, and opened their gates to Charles V., having first stipulated for the establishment of a bank and various privileges, which were granted. Soubise was taken from the Captal de Buche, and the captal himself made prisoner. Edward wished to ransom him, but Charles, who knew the importance of a great name, took care not to repeat the error of releasing him. He caused him to be closely confined in the temple at Paris, and he died in confinement.

The King of England, deeply mortified to see a reign fruitful of glory likely to close under such awful reverses, wished to make one more attempt in person, to regain what had been snatched from him. He put to sea with three thousand lances and ten thousand archers, in the hope that his presence at the theatre of war would turn the course of victory. But he was not enabled to make the experiment. Contrary winds opposed; and after vainly combating them for two months, he was driven back to the English coast; and in the following spring, [1375] Poitou, Saintonge, and l'Aunis were re-united to France. John de Montfort, undecided till then, at length made it a point of

honour to give the English his assistance. A treaty was concluded at Westminster in July, between the Duke of Britany and the King of England, which gave to the former the earldom of Richmond. This alliance was made too late. The noblesse of Britany, won over by Du Guesclin, now filled the court and army of the French king. The feeble efforts made in behalf of Edward were unsuccessful; and Du Guesclin and Clisson everywhere triumphant;—in a short time De Montfort, who still adhered to the English, retained of his dominions only Derval, Brest, and Auray. Anxious to avenge one who had been devoted to his cause, Edward sent him into France with the Duke of Lancaster, and the troops which he himself had proposed to command. Arriving at Calais, the duke increased his army by adding to it all the English hands then stationed in the north of France, and soon found himself at the head of thirty thousand men. But this force had no better fortune than that which was led on by Knolle. The same scheme of resistance was opposed to its advance. Du Guesclin and the Duke of Burgundy supplied it with what might be called an escort, on their entrance into Picardy, and led it on step by step to Bordeaux, without allowing it to rest anywhere; and on reaching that place, the Duke of Lancaster found but six thousand men remained to him of the host he had marched from Calais. Ashamed of this dismal promenade, in the course of which they had done nothing but strew the roads with the dead bodies of their soldiers, the two dukes immediately put to sea. The legates of the Pope, taking advantage of the general stupefaction which succeeded this strange campaign, negociated a truce for two years. It was concluded just in time to save the remnant of Edward's possessions in Guienne from being seized by Du Guesclin. In Britany, however, the war still lingered on, where the duke had under his command two thousand men-at-arms and three thousand English archers; but a few sieges and skirmishes were all that was attempted.

Charles, in the day of success, was anxious to make peace. During the continuance of the truce negotiations were set on foot. He profited largely from his victories in Guienne, but he was most anxious to recover what the English had gained in the north of France. The conqueror of Crécy, however, could not be prevailed upon to give up Calais. On that point he was inflexible. The truce expired in 1375. It was then renewed for two years. In 1377, Charles, expecting to gain nothing further by negotiation, prepared for war, and sent a fleet to unite with that of Castile in ravaging the English coast. Some prisoners were made at Dover, and from these the important news was obtained that Edward III. was no more, having died on the 23rd of June, at Greenwich. The black prince had sunk into the tomb a year before [June 8th, 1376]; and on the head of his son Richard, then a child, the crown of England had descended.

These events were favourable to Charles, and he failed not to use every exertion to avail himself of the opportunity thus offered. English Picardy was seized by the Duke of Burgundy, and Guienne by Du Guesclin, who

made himself master of a hundred and thirty-four fortresses in a single campaign. The constable of Scotland, Archibald Douglas, reduced Berwick; and the united fleets of France and Castile returned to cruise before Dover. Charles, at length, deemed the caution he had hitherto observed might be spared; and the King of Navarre, who had so often heightened his embarrassments in former times, was in his turn forced to submit to the law of the stronger. He was accused, in 1378, of attempting the life of the king by two confidential servants, whom he had sent to attend on Charles. In a few weeks, stripped of all his possessions in Normandy, Cherburg alone remained to him, which was saved by the succour timely afforded by the English. The Duke of Anjou reclaimed Montpellier; and the King of Castile acting a like part, he who had aspired to the crown of France, found himself compelled to divide his little kingdom of Navarre, twenty fortresses in which he was required to cede, for ten years, to Henry de Transtamare [1379]. The Duke of Lancaster again appeared in Normandy and in Britany, but being defeated, was obliged to return to England, where the populace received him with hisses and reproaches. Brest was the only port in Britany which then remained to De Montfort and the English.

Charles felt disposed to treat De Montfort as he had dealt with the King of Navarre. He convoked a sitting of parliament, for the 4th December, 1379, where he appeared in person, with a numerous attendance of princes of the blood, bishops, and lords. Canard, the king's advocate, caused Pierre Auger, John, Count de Montfort, Duke of Britany, to be called in form at the door of the great chamber, from the top of the steps, in front of the



marble table, and as he did not appear, Canard proceeded to accuse him of rebellion and felony, and concluded by calling for the confiscation of his duchy, which was instantly decreed. Charles had reckoned on the influence of Du Guesclin with the Bretons, but proud as they were of that hero, they

wished not to become French; and when they learned what had been done against the house of De Montfort, they sent deputies to Paris to complain of the order of parliament. On finding that the king designed to make Britany a province of France, they prepared for resistance, and De Beaumanoir, with Eustace de la Housaye and Geoffrey Kerimel, went to England, to announce to the exiled duke that his former subjects wished for his return. He accepted the invitation; the nobles *en masse* came to his standard; nor were there any "companions" of Britany in the service of the King of France, who did not declare for the cause of their country. They repaired in crowds to De Montfort's camp. There remained to Charles only the constable Du Guesclin, Rohan, Clisson, Laval, and Rochefort. When they were commanded to march to Britany, they received the order with coldness and chagrin. Du Guesclin sacrificed his sympathies to his oath, but advanced with a broken heart, declaring that "the best feathers had been torn from his eagle." He was no longer animated by the same spirit and the same companions which were formerly his; and he carried on the war so languidly that some murmurs escaped Charles. Bureau de la Rivière, the favourite minister, jealous of Du Guesclin, is said to have insinuated that the constable indulged his patriotism as a Breton at the expence of his king. The honourable and single minded Du Guesclin could not endure to be suspected. He immediately sent back the constable's sword to Charles, the weight of which had been too heavy for his hands, since he had been forced to draw it against his countrymen, and he intimated his resolution to retire to his estates in Castile. The king, upon this, sent his two brothers, the Dukes of Bourbon and Anjou to him, and their entreaties prevailed so far, that he consented to remain in the service of France, but not to return to Britany. He went to Guienne at the beginning of 1380, and there his noble life was closed. While besieging the castle of Randon he fell sick, and his case soon appeared to be hopeless. He seemed to have a presentment that his end was near when taking leave of the king. "I know not," said he, "that I shall return from the place to which I now march, for I am old, and not strong; I entreat you very humbly to make peace with the Duke of Britany, for the soldiers of that country have well supported you in all your conquests, and would still do so, if you would please to accept of their services." Feeling himself about to expire, he desired that his sword might be brought to him, which being done, he kissed it, and then addressing himself to his old captains, he recommended them above all things to avoid making war on women, children, churchmen, and poor people. On the 13th July he breathed his last, at the age of sixty-six. The English, in the castle of Randon, had promised to surrender on the 12th, if not sooner relieved; and the governor, now arriving in the camp with the keys of the fortress, found the constable was dead. He then deposited his charge on the state bed where the remains were laid, saying he wished to surrender to none but Du Guesclin, though that illustrious captain was no more.



The Governor of Chateau-Randon depositing the keys of the place on the Coffin of Du Guesclin.



Du Guesclin has claims on our admiration of no ordinary character, as a soldier and as a man. His merit was duly recognised by the king he saved. When the warrior paid the debt of nature, Charles deemed him worthy to rest with the monarchs of France, and ordered a tomb to be made for him at St. Denis, near the foot of the sepulchre which had been prepared to receive his own remains, and in which a lamp was to be kept perpetually burning.

The death of Du Guesclin in a manner closes that reign in which all the great exploits were performed by him. Encouraged by the event, the English again appeared in the plains of Champagne, where they were held in check by the Duke of Burgundy, when the ulcer which the king had been warned must not be cured, became suddenly healed. He then felt that it was necessary to prepare for death, and caused himself to be removed to his château de Beauté, on the banks of the Marne. His great anxiety now, was the extreme youth of his successor. By an ordinance made in 1374, he had fixed the age of fourteen, as that, at which the kings of France should be held to have reached maturity, but the child, who was to become king in a few days, was but eleven years and nine months old. Suspecting the greedy and violent character of his eldest brother, the Duke of Anjou, Charles sent him from the château an order not to quit his province, under the pretence that it was threatened by De Montfort and the English. He called round him the Dukes of Bourbon, Burgundy, and Berry, to whom he gave his last instructions, thus seeming to place the regency in their hands. As Du Guesclin



died embracing his sword, Charles the Sage, "the ruling passion, strong in death," was seen faithful in his last moments to the habits of his former life.

On the day of his departure, he dictated to the lawyers in attendance, an ordinance by which certain imposts were in part abolished. The following epitaph was placed on his tomb at St. Denis :—" Here lies Charles V., wise and eloquent, the son of King John, who reigned sixteen years, five months, and seven days, and died in the year of grace, 1380, the 16th day of September."

This king, whose dying words fell on the ear of a town clerk, and who was the first to fly from the field of Poitiers, nevertheless governed triumphantly in this age of chivalry. He found France exhausted, disorganized, partitioned by the English, and ravaged by whole armies of plunderers: he left it re-animated, flourishing, in security, and the integrity of her territory restored; and what is most remarkable, all these mighty changes were effected in his closet, consulting with Bureau de Rivière, and looking from the windows of his hotel St. Paul.

The Duke of Anjou felt little respect for the wishes of a dying brother. He hastened to Paris before Charles breathed his last; and scarcely had the remains of the late king been carried to St. Denis, when he put forth his claim to the government of the kingdom. He had a powerful party in the council, but public opinion was against him. He was a grasping, inflexible man, and had left mournful recollections behind him in his province of Languedoc, which Charles had eventually withdrawn from him. It was known that he had interests out of France, as, in that year, he was adopted by Jeanne de Naples, who had been dethroned by her next heir; and it was presumed that he only coveted power in France, that he might raise money in her cause. His brothers, wishing to be relieved from his presence, took the young king to Melun, while he remained in Paris. After some animated demonstrations, which at one time threatened civil war, a convention was concluded on the 2nd October, which gave him the title of regent, and the first place in the council, but left the care of the king's person, and the management of the revenues, to the Dukes of Bourbon and Burgundy. The recommendation of the council was to have the force of law on all great questions; and it was declared that no alienation of the domains of the crown, during the minority of the king, should be valid. Having thus tied the hands of the Duke of Anjou, they appeased his resentment by giving up to him the jewels and plate of the hotel St. Paul, by the sale of which he raised an enormous sum.

The imposts remitted by the late king were demanded after his death, as absolutely necessary to carry on the government. Revolts were the consequence in various parts of the country. Such was the case at Paris, where John Culdoe, the prévôt of the merchants, was dragged before the regent, and constrained, as the organ of the sedition, to announce the popular will. Culdoe was a timid man; and falling on both knees before the duke, he told him, in a tremulous voice, that the people did not wish to pay any more imposts. The fury manifested by the crowd who sent him supplied the place

of eloquence and courage on the part of the prévôt. The Duke of Anjou was alarmed; and mounting the marble table where he gave audience to the populace, he promised, being then about to leave them, to content them on his return. All the symptoms of a great insurrection were immediately manifested. Nocturnal meetings were held, secret bands were organised, and a chief alone was wanting to lead them into action.

It was under these melancholy auspices that the coronation of the young king was appointed to take place. Before his departure for Melun, Charles VI. named the brave Olivier de Clisson, the friend of Du Guesclin, to be constable. This choice was made in conformity with the wish of the late king, which he had expressed to the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry; but as it was in opposition to that of the Duke of Anjou, he indemnified himself for the wrong, real or supposed, in his own way. It was known that Charles V. had concealed in the château of Melun a great quantity of ingots of gold and silver. The regent ordered a careful search to be made, which, though continued for a long time, was fruitless. Weary of the undertaking, he



allowed his nephew to depart for Rheims. He however remained behind himself; and one day entering the chamber of Philippe de Savoisy, who was

believed to possess the secret, on a sudden the regent stood before him, accompanied by the common executioner, and threatened him with instant decapitation if he did not discover the treasure. Savois, trembling for his life, shewed him a plate in a stone wall, which, being removed, disclosed from fifteen to eighteen millions of francs, which had there been stored away. This was passed into the coffers of the duke, who went forward to join the royal cortege. The fête was superb. At the feast which succeeded the coronation, the Marshal de Sancere, the sieurs de Coucy and de Tremoille, covered with cloth of gold, were on horseback by the sides of the king, and passed the plates over the table. But new scenes of disorder occurred to disturb the rejoicings. The dukes of Anjou and Burgundy claimed the first place, the former as regent, the latter as the most ancient peer of the kingdom. They all but came to blows in the presence of the king, and the partisans of each formed in hostile array, and mutually defied each other. Philippe le Hardi at length impetuously sprung forward, exclaiming, "I will obtain for once that which is my due;" and occupied the disputed post. The king decided that the ceremonies of a coronation were appointed to be performed by the peers of France, and therefore the Duke of Burgundy was fairly entitled to the precedence he had claimed over the regent. This ended the contest for the time, which, though futile in appearance, concealed beneath that which was of much more importance than a question of etiquette. It indicated on the part of the house of Burgundy a thirst for domination, which condemned it to advance a systematic opposition to all power that claimed superiority over it. The late movement of the Parisians showed that the part of the King of Navarre was yet to be played, and that part was constantly sustained through several successive reigns by the Dukes of Burgundy.

Scarcely had the court returned to Paris, when Philippe le Hardi attacked the Duke of Anjou on the subject of the treasure which he had seized at Melun, and insisted that it should be restored; and while this quarrel raged in the halls of the hotel St. Paul, the murmurs in Paris were louder than ever. When the citizens saw the princes return from the coronation, and found the imposts were to be continued, the trades assembled, and tumultuously hastened to the palace under their several banners. The Duke of Anjou and the chancellor ascended the marble table to hear the complaints of the crowd, and replied to them with firmness; but all was to little purpose. The next day the trades mustered again more numerous than before; they came from the Hotel de Ville, where they had armed themselves with mallets of lead, which the late monarch had caused to be deposited there, some of which weighed not less than twenty-five pounds. The presence of the *Maillots* (mallet bearers) settled the question. The advocate-general announced the abolition of the obnoxious imposts; but this tardy concession did not prevent a tumult. The crowd, eager to use their newly acquired arms, went to the offices of the receivers of subsidies, where they destroyed the registers, plundered the goods, and carried off the money. Afterwards they resolved

to attack the Jews who lived in Paris under the protection of the king, which they purchased by large annual payments.

The helpless Hebrews, when sought in their abodes, saved themselves as they could, leaving their counters, abandoning their goods and their houses to the Maillotins, who laid violent hands on whatever they could find. All the securities they held, for money lent to the nobles and the citizens, were at once destroyed. The mob perpetrating these enormities affected religious zeal, and seized the children of the Jewish victims, dragged them to a church, and baptised them by force. Royal authority interfered in their behalf after the mischief was done. The next morning, the Jews were re-instated in their delapidated houses, and a herald proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that whatever had been stolen from them must be restored upon pain of death. Little attention was paid to this royal order.

Meantime an English army remained in France, commanded by the Duke of Buckingham. Relieved from the presence of the Duke of Burgundy, who had been elsewhere engaged in looking after his own personal interests, it marched to the frontiers of Britany, where it proposed to rest from the unproductive fatigue of this useless advance. The accession of a new king, however, had effected a material change in the views of De Montfort. The unpopularity of the English, and the death of the late monarch, furnished him with an admirable pretext for seeking a reconciliation with France. "Those who hated the father," said he to his confidential friends, "may love the son." Buckingham, not satisfied with the reasons opposed to his entering the country, advanced to Rennes, where he, in a conference with De Montfort, gained him over to the English cause; but the council having, on the first indication of a change in his policy, acted in conformity with his views, Clisson wrote to Beaumanoir and the chief of the association of 1379, to speak to De Montfort in a tone so determined, that he was afraid to oppose the French alliance. A treaty was concluded at Paris on the 15th January, 1381, under which the duke agreed to do homage to the King of France for his fief, and to pronounce these words kneeling:—"My very redoubtable lord, I supplicate you to pardon all I have done to move your wrath, which I deeply lament with all my heart." He further bound himself to assist the king against the English and the Navarrese, and, in consequence, came to an open rupture with England. The treaty was officially communicated to Buckingham, and on the 13th April the English embarked for their own country. They retained Brest, however, in their hands, as they did Cherburg, which they had garrisoned for the King of Navarre, as well as Calais and Bordeaux; and thus, notwithstanding their losses, they held all the shores of the Atlantic in check.

But danger was not looked for from that side. Other thoughts occupied the regent. His interest in the succession to the crown of Naples, led him to take part in the great schism which had some time before broken out, between the Pope of Rome, Urban V., who favoured the pretensions of

Charles Duras, and Clement, the Pope of Avignon, who supported those of the Duke of Anjou. The latter was anxious to procure the recognition of Clement by the French clergy. Faithful to the traditions of Avignon, he used his power to exact profits in every possible mode, and it was said the regent participated in them.

Eclipsed in the council by the rival influence of his two brothers, the Duke of Berry consoled himself by obtaining a grant of the governorship of Languedoc from Charles. Gaston de Foix was at that time the governor, and the inhabitants satisfied with him, the estates of the province were convened and they sent to the Duke of Berry, who had passed the Loire, an intimation that they did not wish to receive him. The young king, on hearing of this opposition, was furious ; and taking the oriflamme from St. Denis, he announced that he would march in person, at the head of all the troops in the kingdom, to punish the insolent province which had refused to ratify a choice made in his name. Circumstances rendered it necessary for him to turn his attention elsewhere. The citizens again became mutinous, and a disposition to revolt manifested itself on every side. In England, a seditious priest, named John Bull, or Ball, stirred up the working classes, by contending for the restoration of the primitive equality of the human race,

“ When Adam dived and Eve span.”

The Flemings renewed their everlasting insurrection. The white hoods of Ghent, led on by Philippe Arteville, the son of John Arteville, made open war against their count ; and the Duke of Burgundy, his son-in-law and heir, besieged Charles, with a view to carry him into Flanders. To prosecute the war in the south supplies were necessary, and these the people refused to furnish. The Duke of Anjou, anxious to proceed to Naples, wished to procure money at any price. Seven times he called a council of the lords, bishops, and richest citizens of Paris, without success. These deliberations continued, when the citizens flew to arms. The flame soon spread over the provinces. At Rouen, two hundred drunken companions seized on a merchant draper, an inoffensive citizen, who, from the rotundity of his person, had obtained the surname of “*le Gros*,” (the fat.) They proclaimed him king, and furnishing him on the spur of the moment with a throne in a chariot, they paraded him through the streets, in the midst of ironical acclamations. On reaching the market-place, they compelled him to declare that the imposts were abolished, and his edict was instantly proclaimed by a herald through the city. This farce proved a very tragical one. They brought to the King of Rouen the collectors of taxes, and compelled him, under pain of death, to say—“ Do it ! do it !” which condemned whoever was led before him to the last punishment. It is said that Flemish messengers were sent to France to stir up universal sedition. Certain it is, that the revolts at Paris and Rouen were connected with the disturbances excited in England by the preacher, John Bull. A monk of St. Denis, who was then in London, when the head of an arch-

bishop was kicked about the streets, reported that he was told—"Something more abominable than this will soon be witnessed in France."



Money being indispensable to meet these difficulties, the regent first published, from his retreat behind the walls of the Châtelet, an ordinance which re-established the objectionable imposts. Afterwards a man, mounted on a good horse, appeared in the halls, and announced with a loud voice that several articles of gold had been stolen from the king's plate, and offered pardon to the robber on his restoring what had been taken away. When he had thus brought a crowd round him, the spokesman all of a sudden exclaimed—"The imposts are re-established;" and instantly fled at full speed.

The next day, the collectors presented themselves to receive the duties on goods sold in the halls. One of them came to a female vendor of cresses, who alarmed those near her by her cries, and the unfortunate man was knocked down and killed on the spot. A frightful tumult ensued. The trades prepared for battle were instantly on foot, and many of them ran through the streets, shouting—"To arms for the liberty of the country!" They proceeded to the Hotel de Ville, to the church of St. Jacques, where they murdered the collectors. They plundered everywhere on their way, and the Jews were again the victims of popular excitement. The monks of St. Denis saw their establishment assailed, on the supposition that some of the government agents were there. Thence the plunderers repaired to the Châtelet, where all the prisoners were set at liberty; and among them Hugues

Aubryot, formerly prévôt of Paris, who had been prosecuted by the university because he refused to recognise its privileges. Aubryot was now placed at the head of the disturbers; but he, an old man, looked with suspicion on the insurrection, and stole quietly away from the dangerous honour of being



appointed its leader. The Maillotins being disposed to continue their outrages, on the following morning great alarm was felt throughout the city. The captains of fifties, however, collected ten thousand armed citizens, who were sent in detachments to scour the streets. The council and all the magistrates had thought it prudent to withdraw, and the advocate-general, Desmarets, alone remained in Paris. He endeavoured to tranquillize the populace, who were about marching to burn the bridge of Charenton; and order was soon restored by the eloquent voice of the old servant of Charles V. It remained to report the audacity of the Maillotins to the king and his uncles; but in the first place the regent conducted his nephew to the vicinity of Rouen, which had been most deeply implicated in the revolt. The citizens wished to make conditions before opening their gates, but a breach was made in the walls, and the royal army entered it as a fortress taken by assault. The imposts were instantly restored, and the belfry was pulled down from which the bell had sounded to assemble the trades, who were now compelled to deposit their arms in the château. What became of the unfortunate le Gros is not known, but there is little doubt that he fell with the ringleaders of the crowd who were killed in the market-place. All this was effected in

the course of three days; and Charles and his uncles then took the road to Paris.

The substantial citizens, apprehensive of the vengeance of the Maillotins, desired to be friends with royalty, and the court had scarcely reached Vincennes when it received a deputation, at the head of which Desmarets appeared with the doctors of the university. The attitude of the trades was still so menacing, and the revolvers of Paris were so well supported by the provincial citizens, that it was not thought prudent to act with severity. The war in Flanders continued at the expence of the count, who had just sustained a defeat from Arteville. All these circumstances rendered the appearance of a reconciliation necessary. The Parisians paid 100,000 francs to the princes, who made a grand parade on entering the city, but did not feel strong enough to take vengeance on the offenders, though little disposed to pardon them.

The Duke of Anjou now proceeded to the south, carrying in his coffers all the treasures he had been able to amass in the two years of the regency; and the Duke of Burgundy marched to the north with the king and the oriflamme, accompanied by all the chivalry of France, to which was soon united the Flemish nobility, in order to put down a sort of new citizen Jacquerie which had broken out. One battle decided the question. It was fought on the 27th November, near Rosebecque, a little village on the banks of the Lys, where Arteville had taken a position in the burg, and formed round it a deep ditch. He, however, disdained the shelter of his entrenchment, and putting himself at the head of the soldiers of Ghent, fell on the main body of the French with such fury that their first lines were thrown into disorder. The constable then brought forward the left wing, and the Flemings were pressed so sharply, that their ranks were broken, and a terrible carnage ensued. Forty thousand men, according to Froissart, and twenty thousand, according to the Flemish historians, remained on the battle-field. Their chief was found in the ditch of Rosebecque without a single wound, having been smothered beneath a crowd of fugitives, who were forced into it with him. From Rosebecque Charles came to Courtray, where perceiving suspended from the roof of the cathedral the gold spurs and the standards of the knights of Robert d'Artois, he was so incensed at being reminded of a defeat sustained forty years before, that he burnt the city, and massacred the inhabitants to the last man. This dreadful severity was not caused merely by the spectacle just described. According to Du Verdier, the anniversary of the battle of Crécy had been celebrated every year in a manner that wounded French pride, and three hundred gilt spurs, snatched from the remains of the illustrious dead who fell on that great day, had, on these occasions, been exultingly displayed as the most valued treasure of the city. Nothing, however, could be urged that would reconcile modern feeling to the hateful ferocity of Charles.

Letters had been found at Courtray which had been sent from the trades of Paris to those of Flanders. It was soon known that during the first days

of the campaign, an attempt had been made by the Maillotins on the royal château de Beauté, where Charles V. lay buried. The men of Ghent now stood alone opposed to the victorious army, and the king confided to Louis le Mâle the task of pursuing them, and departed from Courtray to revenge his own injuries. Paris had not to learn that it had already been conquered at Rosebecque; but it was attempted to conceal the dread which it caused. The army from Flanders arriving at Bourget, a small village about three leagues from Paris, was met by couriers, who announced that twenty thousand citizens in arms, with captains at their head, were drawn up in order under the heights of Montmartre. A few menacing words from the young king sufficed to drive the revolvers to seek concealment behind the walls. The royal army entered the city, as it had done at Rouen, in order of battle; and on this occasion the Parisians were not spared. Three hundred citizens were arrested on the first day, and a goldsmith and a cloth merchant were beheaded in the halls. Night after night some of the captives disappeared, being strangled in their cells, and thrown from the tower windows of the Châtelet into the Seine. The citizens, who had given up their arms, and suffered the iron chains which had been placed across the streets to be removed to Vincennes, were filled with alarm, not knowing where the vengeance of the court would stop. Desmarets himself, the venerable old man who had alone faced the threatening Maillotins, and whose only crime was having remained in Paris to plead the cause of peace and good order, Desmarets, the friend of the late king, was sacrificed to the fury of the princes; and he marched to the place of execution calmly repeating the words of the psalmist, "Judge me, O God! and decide on my cause." At the end of a fortnight, when the alarm was at its height, it was attempted to turn this state of things to the advantage of the revenue; and the king, being seated, surrounded by his uncles and the council, ordered the people of Paris to come before him to the steps of the palace. The dukes there fell at the king's feet, and, to make the farce more complete, caused the whole crowd to go on their knees, and in that position to call for grace and mercy. Charles then, on the 25th January, 1383, granted them pardon, but only in regard to capital punishments. The obnoxious imposts were re-established and augmented, and enormous fines were demanded from those who had been conspicuous in the late troubles. The revenues of the Hotel de Ville, were transferred to the customs, and the office of prévôt to the merchants was once more abolished.

General tranquillity was restored for a season. The opposition of the smaller provinces ceased of itself; and the revolt of Languedoc, once so threatening, terminated in a manner favourable to the crown. The Count de Foix, at first victorious, soon declined to move against the uncle of the king; and the inhabitants wishing to continue the struggle by themselves, and having assumed the strange name of *Tuchins*, were soon driven from the cities to the woods and mountains, where being followed by the royal

troops, they were compelled to submit. In vain the Flemings called on the English to assist them. As in the case of the Jacquerie, political considerations gave way before the general interests of society. The nobles of England, having narrowly escaped the revolution called for by John Bull, were little disposed to favour theories in Flanders, which had nearly proved fatal to themselves in their own country. The Kings of France and England were disposed for war, but their uncles were desirous of peace; but as they could not agree on the terms in the conferences which took place at Lelenghen, where the restitution of Brest, Cherbourg and Calais, was demanded, a truce was concluded for two years in 1383. In the following year, Louis le Mâle died at St. Omer, of disease, according to some, but according to others, in consequence of being poniarded by the Duke of Berry, who badly served his own interests, if indeed he committed the crime. His brother, the Duke of Burgundy, from that time became the absolute chief of the council. He, already so powerful, inherited with Flanders, Nivernois, and Artois, the *compté* of Rhetel. The people of Ghent were still in arms; but Philippe, after a series of battles of no great moment, succeeded in effecting an accommodation, which placed him in such a position, that he might almost be regarded as a second King of France. From this time the second house of Burgundy began to play a great part in history. It established a new feudality, very different from that which had named Hugues Capet king, and which had aimed at dethroning St. Louis. Its chiefs were thenceforth the uncles or brethren of the king; its great personages nobles of the royal court. Twice it disposed of the kingdom, when the Duke of Burgundy gave it to the English by the treaty of Troyes, and when he restored it to the King of France by the conferences of Arras.

A gloomy hostility existed from the commencement of this reign between the regents and the priests of Charles V., whom their former master had not accustomed to that violent and disorganising administration which was now witnessed. It was not with them merely a question of principle. Desmarets had already fallen a victim to the hatred of the dukes; and Bureau de Rivière himself, threatened with a like sentence on his return from the coronation, must have succumbed, but for the support of Clisson, who silenced his adversaries by offering them combat. Every day on the verge of disgrace, obliged to shut their eyes to the depredations of the king's uncles, the members of the council waited for the moment when Charles, by asserting his majority, might free himself and them from a state of dependence so irksome and degrading. He was already two years beyond the age named for the majority of the Kings of France in the ordinance of 1374. Charles VI. was of an ardent, impetuous nature, impatient for action, not unlike King John, but marked by more kindly feeling. Taught by his father to admire that which among kings is conventionally called the love of the people, he was well disposed to favour any measure for the welfare of the public, which promised in its progress to effect his own emancipation. The uncles, who

soon perceived this disposition to spurn their authority, applied themselves to distract his attention by giving him for a wife Isabella of Bavaria, then a child but fourteen years of age; and afterwards by engaging him in warlike operations against the English, which were resumed in 1385. But still the personal acts of the regent appeared more odious than ever. They revived the scheme of Charles V. to invade England. Troops were already collected at Arras; and Robert, King of Scotland, had engaged to favour the enterprise of the French, by attacking the northern counties of England. Philippe, who had not yet concluded with the people of Ghent, turned these preparations to his own advantage; and led his nephew into Flanders, with the force which had been raised to act against the English. He compelled the cities which had hitherto held out to submit; but when this was effected, there remained of the army, to carry on the national war, but a small body of fifteen hundred men-at-arms; and the Admiral de Vienne, who conducted them to Scotland, only succeeded in bringing upon that country an invasion by the English. King Robert, weary of such dangerous allies, hastened to make terms with Richard. In the following year, the Duke of Burgundy, who had now nothing to covet but the conquest of England, as he was actually master of Flanders, re-commenced preparations on a scale of extraordinary magnitude. Ships were collected from every part, from Prussia to Spain, till no fewer than thirteen hundred and eighty-seven were assembled in the harbour of Sluys, where the embarkation was to take place.

This projected expedition was distinguished by an immense work of carpentry, said to have cost as much as seventy-two ships. It was a kind of city of wood, three thousand feet in diameter, and the various parts could be put together and separated at pleasure. This was intended to receive and lodge the army on its arrival in the enemy's country, till some strong place should be taken. Everything connected with this undertaking was in the same gigantic proportions; and England, torn by interminable civil wars, waited the result with anxiety. It failed through the arrogant jealousy of the Duke of Berry. Philippe, all powerful in the council, had procured the adoption of this project without consulting the Duke of Berry, and the latter feared that its success would greatly strengthen that ascendancy which had already thrown him into the shade. He, in consequence, delayed joining at Arras with the troops which he was to lead, till the fine season was passed. Storms arose, which wrecked the vessels, and damaged the magazines and provisions; and the troops, disgusted at being kept so long in a state of inaction, withdrew, and traversing Artois and Picardy, consoled themselves by plundering the inhabitants, for the loss of that booty which they had expected to find at Dover and in London. The immense sums expended on this demonstration were in consequence lost; and those who had resisted the imposts so long the subject of complaint, were loud in their murmurs against the prince, whose folly had caused the produce of them to be so foolishly employed. He was, indeed, loudly accused of having been paid for his neglect

by the ministers of Richard. The Duke of Burgundy, however, gained something even from this national disaster : Charles VI. gave him the city of Blois.

France could not immediately renounce so favourite a project as the invasion of the land of Edward III. and the black prince. In 1387, Richard II., having shaken off the yoke of his two uncles, Cambridge and Buckingham, they raised the standard of revolt, and regained the confidence of their nephew by the sword. The presence of a French army at such a juncture in England, it was thought, would prove of great importance ; and two fleets were simultaneously equipped, the first at Harfleur, in Normandy, under De Vienne, the other at the little port of Lentrignet, in Britany, to be commanded by Clisson. By some fatality, at the moment when they were to set sail, De Montfort, who had always in secret been on friendly terms with his former English allies, and besides animated by personal hatred, drew the constable into the castle of Vannes, and, at once throwing off the mask,



ordered him to be put into a sack, and thrown into the sea. Happily, the life of Clisson was saved by Basalen, the governor, through his deferring the execution of the order given in the first moment of passion. The constable, however, was detained in prison ; and this caused numerous desertions from Lentrignet. The new display of power led to nothing more than a few naval skirmishes off Harfleur, in which some English vessels were put to flight.

About this time, the King of Navarre closed his life, in a manner as dismal as his career had been heartless. Advanced years, and the excesses in

which he had indulged caused him to suffer extremely from cold. To restore natural heat, the physicians ordered him to be enveloped in a sheet moistened with brandy. This was done, and the linen was in the course of being stitched up, when a wax taper, used to burn off a scrap of thread, having been brought too close, the sheet caught fire, and burst into a flame, which scorched the king to death, before assistance could be offered.

Charles was greatly incensed at the treachery of the Duke of Britany towards Clisson, and threatened nothing less than depriving him of his duchy altogether; but the regents interfered, partly from the little love they had for Clisson, the patron of Bureau de Rivière, and succeeded in turning the king's wrath from De Montfort, and in persuading him to march against the Duke of Gueldres, with whom the Duke of Burgundy was already at war. This feeble-enemy was soon subdued [1388], to increase the power of the house of Burgundy; but this was the last triumph of the regents.

Having gained his twentieth year, Charles was at length determined to commence his reign. He accordingly convoked a grand assembly of bishops and peers at Rheims; and first thanking his uncles for the great care they had taken of him and of the kingdom during his infancy, he announced that it was his intention thenceforth to govern for himself. This proceeding had been concerted with Bureau de la Rivière, Pierre Ancelin, and other ministers of his father. It took the regents by surprise. The Duke of Burgundy was sent to his estates in Flanders, and everything immediately assumed a new aspect at court. The administration returned to the maxims of the late king, taking a course less violent, but more firm. The taxes were reduced, and a part of the parliament was renewed, excluding many clerks and abbés, who had been nominated by the regents, in contempt for the antipathy which had always been felt for anything that caused the canon law to interfere with the Roman law. To gratify the Parisians, the new ministers restored to them their prévôt of merchants, but reserved the right of appointing him to themselves. John Juvenal des Ursins, a grave and peaceable man, was on this occasion named to the office.

The better to secure internal peace, Bureau de la Rivière and his colleagues concluded in a few months [1389] a truce with England for three years. The work of administrative reform was commenced by calling the Duke of Berry to account for his government in the south, where he had continued to act on that system which had thrown the whole kingdom under his uncle into disorder. A poor monk from Languedoc revealed to Charles the excesses of all kinds which his uncle had sanctioned. Charles, in consequence, visited in person the provinces governed by the duke, going from city to city to hear the complaints of the nobles and citizens. At Toulouse, he caused the Sire de Bétezac to be burnt. This man was the steward of the duke, and the ready instrument of all his violences. He extended his royal vengeance to the duke himself, who was deprived of his government [1390].

But all the details of administration were insufficient to content the mind

of the youthful monarch; and full of warlike ideas, he dreamed but of crusades and distant expeditions. Sometimes he wished to attack the Mahometans of Africa, and sometimes the great Turcoman, Bajazet, who had assumed the title of "the scourge of God." Attempts were made to induce Charles to interfere between the two popes; but from this and similar undertakings he was restrained by his prudent ministers, till a more reasonable ground for war offered itself.

On the 13th June, 1392, on the day of the feast of the Holy Sacrament, a grand gala was given at the hotel St. Paul, where jousts, feasting and dancing, were continued till after midnight. The constable returned almost alone to his hotel in the Rue de Paradise. That vast and silent waste, sufficiently dreary at the present time, was infinitely more so then, and contained nothing but large hotels, convents and gardens. One Pierre de Craon, who felt great enmity against Clisson, waited for him, with four bandits on horseback, at the corner of the Rue St. Catherine. Clisson approached; the torches were then extinguished, and they all attacked him. The constable, at first, suspected that it was only a frolic of the king's younger brother; but Craon wished to aggravate the bitterness of his last moments, by making him acquainted with the fact, that he was the author of his death; and, with this object in view, he called out to him, "I am Pierre de Craon, your enemy." The constable, who was armed but with a small cutlass, defended himself as well as he could, but at length received a severe blow on the head. Happily, in falling, he struck the door of a bake-house, which was partly open, the baker being engaged in preparing his oven at that early hour in the morning. Clisson's head, and part of his body, were precipitated into the shop, which it was necessary to enter in order to dispatch him. The bravoës were afraid to dismount; and hoping that the wounds he had received would prove fatal, they galloped off. Clisson, though he had sustained but slight injury, was stunned. The king, informed of it a few moments afterwards, did not wait to dress himself, but in his shirt, throwing a cloak over it, he hastened to the baker's, where he found the constable, though still suffering, had recovered his senses. The king promised to avenge his officer, swearing that nothing should be more dearly required than this ferocious outrage.

It was soon known that the assault was the work of the Duke of Britany, whose stedfast hatred had, on this occasion, availed itself of the arm of one of the old knights of Louis d'Anjou. Pierre de Craon was the only one who had returned rich from the unfortunate expedition to Naples, where, though much was amassed by the heir of Jeanne, the greater number of his followers were left exposed to famine, and all the deplorable maladies which follow in its train. Viewed at court with an evil eye, the widow of Louis d'Anjou had accused him before the king of causing the failure of the expedition, by appropriating to himself sums destined for the public service, and Craon had fallen into disgrace. The confidant of the amours of Louis d'Orleans, the

brother of the king, Craon had indiscreetly talked of them. Louis alone was the author of his disgrace; but he ascribed it to Clisson, who was one of those who treated him openly with contempt. John de Montfort sent him to Paris to gratify their common vengeance; and, on his return, overwhelmed him with reproaches, for having failed in his attempt.

War against Britany was resolved upon. Charles sent an order to his uncles of Burgundy and Britany to join him at Mans, where a general rendezvous of the army had been appointed to take place. They came, but were indignant at the arrogance of the *marmosets*, so they called the ministers who would plunge the nation into a war, because one of their body had been affronted, without first consulting them. Bureau de la Rivière and the ministers, notwithstanding all their efforts to render themselves popular, had to encounter violent opposition. The nobility were envious of the consequence enjoyed by the influential servants of the crown, the clergy were dissatisfied, and the uncles of the king were well disposed again to seize on the sovereign power, when an unlooked for event occurred, which spared them the risk of a doubtful struggle.

Shortly before setting out for Rheims, Charles had been attacked by fever, from which, at the time of his departure, he was but imperfectly recovered. His manner became strange: sometimes he would remain mute, and at others would give utterance to a series of extravagant speeches. On the 3rd of August, however, his conduct became more extraordinary than ever; and having drawn up his troops in battle array, and armed himself at all points, he made a promenade, apparently without any object in view, to a lazaret house established in the middle of the wood for the reception of deceased persons, a short distance from the city. There a man of grim aspect, but half dressed, and wearing a loose cloth coat or frock, started from among the trees, and seizing the monarch's bridle, "Pass no further, noble king," he exclaimed; "you are betrayed." Charles manifested alarm. His hands fell on the saddle, and he gloomily moved on, without speaking. The man had disappeared. On leaving the wood, they entered on a sandy plain, and the royal cavalcade solemnly advanced; when one of the men-at-arms, rendered drowsy by the heat of the sun, accidentally dropped his lance. It fell on the king's helmet, which a page carried before him. The noise of the shock, shaken as the king's nerves were, overthrew his mind altogether. Raising himself furiously in his stirrups, he drew his sword, and exclaiming "treason!" killed the involuntary offender on the spot; and then attacked all who were near him, galloping, and striking right and left, till at length he sunk exhausted into the arms of his guards. He had become a maniac.

The king almost perfectly recovered his senses on the third day, and returned to the capital closely beset by his uncles, who never quitted him for a moment. The nation was again threatened with a regency, and the ministers were sent from court, and ordered not to return within fifteen leagues of Paris. There was no longer a thought of prosecuting the war in



Charles VI. in the Forest of Mans.

Britany; but Clisson, not looking for assistance from the government, proceeded, at the head of his friends and vassals, to take vengeance on his enemies. Philippe of Burgundy sent reinforcements to the Duke of Britany, and wished Clisson to be recalled. On his refusal to come to Paris, he deprived him of his office; but Charles, who had lucid intervals, awoke to a sense of the injustice of this step, and ordered the constable's sword to be restored to the faithful Breton. He would, perhaps, have completely recovered; but at the commencement of the next year [1393], a new accident rendered his case more hopeless than ever. At the hotel of the Queen Blanche, there was a grand celebration of the second marriage of a German lady in the suite of Queen Isabella, at which Charles was present, disguised as a satyr, with four lords all chained together. To render the representation faithful to mythological tradition, they were dressed in a sort of cloth swathing, smeared with pitch and rosin, and dotted with locks of wool. The king's brother, approaching with some of his friends, applied a flambeau to one of them, to make the ladies laugh. In a moment the whole were enveloped in flames, and the danger was the greater from their being chained together. Charles alone was saved from the consequence of this freak by the Duchess of Berry, who had recognised him, and who, forbidding him to move, threw herself upon him, and covered him with her mantle till assistance could be obtained. The relapse which followed was terrible. He no longer wished to be a king or a husband. He threw away his arms, tore the *fleurs de lis* from his clothes, and obliterated them from his plate. The sight of his queen, whom he had fondly loved before, threw him into a fury. To conceal from the people the sad spectacle of a king bereft of reason, it was deemed necessary to wall up all the principal entrances of the hotel St. Paul.

The regents caused prayers and processions to be made for the recovery of the king, and had recourse to the most celebrated physicians of the time. Their efforts, however, proving fruitless, he was handed over to charlatans, who pretended that they could restore him. Two monks engaged to cure his malady, and for that purpose employed charms and witchcraft. The only result was, they aggravated the disease by the terror which their strange practices inspired in the patient. Eventually, they were condemned and burnt as sorcerers. The king, however, had intervals of reason, when he asked for his ministers as if he had awaked out of a sound sleep. He occasionally set aside the ordinances of the regents, and when this happened, great rejoicings took place throughout the capital. But he almost immediately relapsed, and the government of his uncles, though often threatened, still survived these passing accidents.

While they were only seeking to profit from the madness of the king, the dukes found an opportunity of promoting the best interests of the country. The truce with England, which had been many times renewed, they converted into a definitive treaty of peace, [1396] and Richard, to cement the peace so concluded, demanded the hand of the sister of Charles. For this alliance he

was compelled to pay dearly. Besides the solemn cession of his rights to the crown of France, Richard ceded Brest and Cherbourg, the only cities which remained to England out of her conquests in Britany and Normandy. At the same time, the princes sent into Hungary a crusade of knights, under the command of the Duke of Burgundy's son, John, who was afterwards surnamed *sans peur* (the fearless). The gallant youth of France rushed into this enterprise with transport. Their ardour astonished, more than it pleased, their Hungarian friends. With mad impetuosity they pushed forward to Nicopolis, when Bajazet gave them such a reception, that in the battle fought near that place [1398], those who did not fall in the field became his prisoners. The conqueror having ordered the captives to pass before him in review, was struck with the appearance of the son of the Duke of Burgundy; and after gazing stedfastly on him, turned to his generals, and said, "Here



is one whom we must send home, for if he gets back to his own country, he will be the means of causing great troubles there."

The case of the king was now considered utterly hopeless. He experienced seven relapses in the course of the year [1399]. Philippe le Hardi had been so long accustomed to expect from the Duke of Berry, if not abject submission, at least a timid deference, born of conscious inferiority, and had had the regal power so long in his hands, that he began to regard it as wholly his own, when a formidable rival presented himself in the person of

Louis d'Orleans, the brother of the king. His youth, studies, and love of pleasure, had hitherto prevented him from taking an active part in public affairs, but now, being nearly thirty years of age, he claimed the station assigned to him by his birth. His consort, the beautiful and gracious Valentina of Milan, was the only lady of the court Charles suffered to approach his person, and her gentle influence over the unhappy monarch was so great, that the common people suspected her of witchcraft. It was at this period [1399], that a revolution was effected in England, and the Duke of Lancaster supplanted Richard II., and succeeded to his throne, under the title of Henry IV. Combined with other circumstances, that event gave rise to an interminable struggle between the uncle and the brother of the king. When Richard fell, four ambassadors were sent from the court of France to claim his queen, Isabella. She was given up to them with a portion of her dowry. Louis d'Orleans was eager to avenge the wrong which she had sustained. He was opposed by the pacific views of the Duke of Burgundy, and in resentment of this he excited the young nobles to mark their contempt for the "cowardice" of his uncle.

Equally at variance were the two dukes on the affairs of Britany. De Montfort died on the 1st November, 1399, and Louis appeared at Pontoise with a body of men to escort the young heir to his duchy. Philippe encouraged the barons to resist, and Louis and his friends resolved to carry their point by force. A third subject of difference was offered by the schism between the Popes. The French clergy had withdrawn their obedience from the Pope at Avignon, and their example had been followed by the whole kingdom. Louis was indignant against his uncle, who had forced Benoit, the new Pope, to make the usual vow, by imprisoning him in his own palace. Such, however, was the character of his anger, that it would have promptly turned against the Pope, had Philippe declared in his favour. In the same way, when Stephen, Duke of Burgundy, the father of Queen Isabella, his brother's consort, came to announce the election of his relation, Robert of Bavaria, to the empire, to replace Venceslas, notwithstanding the close intimacy which had already been remarked between Louis and the queen, he was instantly opposed to the duke. Venceslas had been deposed by the Germans. As the Duke of Burgundy approved of the act, Louis declared loudly in favour of the cashiered emperor. He even set out for Germany at the head of a small army, knowing so little of what he was about, that before he reached the frontier he was forced to retrace his steps. Venceslas was a sort of crowned rustic. His fall gave him little concern, as it left him more at leisure to enjoy his wine and the pleasures of the chase; and while his generous defenders proceeded to France with all speed to crave assistance, he coolly subscribed his own deposition.

The Duke of Orleans wished to turn the incident to his own account, though Venceslas was no longer interested in the question. He induced the Duke of Gueldres to join him at Paris with five hundred men-at-arms.

They were for the most part Bretons and Normans, who were quartered in the vicinity of his hotel, near the gate of St. Anthony, and in the adjacent villages. This new encampment announced with sufficient distinctness the designs of Louis; and Philippe hastened to counteract them, and quickly collected from Flanders, Brabant and Bavaria, an army of seven thousand men. Louis was equally active to summon his friends from all parts; and the forces of the two rivals were soon nearly equal. The citizens, disarmed since their last revolt, trembled to behold this multitude eager for pillage, whom a single word would let loose upon them. The Duke of Berry and the queen, to prevent such a calamity, proposed an accommodation, and, through the mediation of the latter, the two princes were reconciled. They met at the Hotel de Nesle, January 14th, 1402, where they solemnly embraced. They then severally dismissed their followers, who, returning to their own countries, ravaged every place they marched through on their route. The reconciliation, however, was not sincere, and the great question was yet to be decided, whether the Duke of Burgundy or Louis should reign. Instead of appealing to arms, the latter now had recourse to the influence of the amiable Valentina, who, while Philippe was on a journey to Artois, procured an ordinance from the king, by which he confided the government of the country to his brother. The first use made of this was to impose a new tax, against which loud and universal murmurs were raised. Philippe soon re-appeared, and availing himself of a momentary improvement in the king's health, prevailed upon Charles to restore him to the post from which his rival had caused him to be removed.

Louis now thought of taking up the cause of the Pope at Avignon, to whose assistance he sent five hundred knights. Benoit, liberated from his prison by Robert de Braguemont, one of his guards, resumed immediately his rights as sovereign pontiff; and Charles, who signed anything laid before him, stamped his claim with legitimacy by a royal ordinance [1404]. The Duke of Orleans, however, was not satisfied with having in a manner created a pope; he threw France and England into a flame, by an insolent challenge which he sent to the English king.

His rival, the Duke of Burgundy, was now about to close his earthly career. At the beginning of the year, finding his health decline, he desired to be removed from Brussels to Halle, in Hainault. He was so infirm, that it was necessary to send men before him on the road with spades and pick-axes, to level any inequalities that might shake his carriage. At Halle, he took up his abode at a public hotel, known by the sign of "the stag," and there, on the 27th April, 1404, he died. His remains were taken to Arras, where a solemn service was performed over them. The restless ambition which had animated him through life had not greatly enriched him; for his duchess, Margaret, on account of the magnitude of his debts, did not venture to claim his moveables, but solemnly renounced all right to them in the chapel at Arras, as Monstrelet relates, "by placing her girdle with her purse

and keys on the coffin, and demanding that the act should be put into writing by a public notary there present."

John de Nevers, *sans-peur*, his son, the prisoner at Nicopolis, naturally inherited the paternal policy; but to motives of ambition, in his case a sentiment of personal hatred to the Duke of Orleans was joined, as the whispers of the court charged the latter with having formed a liason with the Duchess de Nevers. Having, in the first instance, taken possession of his estates in Flanders and Burgundy, he repaired to Paris, where he found the whole power of the state in the hands of Louis and the queen. Theirs was an alliance which it was not easy to dissolve, as, if public rumour might be credited, it was cemented by something more than political sympathies. After the fall of Richard II., Louis had constantly and loudly declared himself in favour of war with England. He now pressed it with more zeal than ever; and hostilities were commenced on the frontiers of Guienne, and on the shores of Britany. New imposts were rendered necessary by the rupture, and Louis, careless and improvident as ever, did not in any case abate his expensive pleasures. The people complained that the money taken from them was spent at the Louvre in sumptuous fêtes, and magnificent improvements to gratify his taste for luxurious enjoyment. So great was the general indignation, that it resounded even from the pulpits in the churches; and an



Augustine, named Jacques Legrand, who preached before the queen on Ascension day in the year 1405, denounced his excesses with such

vehemence, that one of the officers of Isabella threatened to throw him into the Seine. The menace was laughed at; and the king, wishing to hear this daring preacher, listened to him with much attention, and declared on withdrawing that the monk had preached well, and he should endeavour to profit by his sermon. His malady, however, continued to increase, and precluded him from attempting any continuous reforms. An accident which endangered the life of the Duke of Orleans, when he was travelling to St. Germain's in the queen's litter, seemed for a moment to produce a change in Louis, and he publicly announced that he would pay all his creditors. Of these there were more than eight hundred. The magnitude of their claims put an end to his conversion, and the unfortunate applicants, instead of receiving their money, were rudely sent away with their bills unpaid.

The careless life of Louis, and his contempt for public opinion, offered great advantages to the Duke of Burgundy. He smothered his constantly increasing hatred for a whole year, contenting himself with emphatically protesting in council against new imposts; and thus he silently gained that popularity which his father had so anxiously sought, while the Duke of Anjou was regent. Towards the middle of the year [1405], the king had an interval of health, and, as usual, recurred immediately to his projected changes. He convoked an extraordinary council, and wrote for John Sans-peur to come to him. John set out for Paris, accompanied by eight hundred knights, leaving orders, both in Flanders and Burgundy, that large bodies of troops should follow, to rejoin him in the capital. The fury of the populace was then at its height against the queen and her favourite, Louis. The cry was that they had plundered the treasury, and sent the fruits of their rapine for safety to a foreign country. It was asked by some if cart-loads of treasure had not been seized at Metz, which the Bavarians were conveying into Germany. The Duke of Burgundy came to Paris, and his escort, increased by the malcontents who joined him on the way, amounted to nearly six thousand men. Charles had again become insane, and his will was no longer to be thought of. Louis quitted Paris, where he found he must be at the mercy of his enemy, and went to Melun, having first ordered Boucicaut to take the dauphin thither. Apprised of this step, on his entering Paris, John instantly galloped through the city, overtook the young prince at Villejuif, compelled those who attended him to turn back, and placed him in the Louvre under a strong guard. The Orleans party, however, collected at Melun and Paris, prepared for war. The Duke de Limburg established himself, with eight hundred men-at-arms, near the Louvre, and the bishop of Liege arrived with six thousand soldiers. The Duke of Burgundy sent two thousand, and Austria, Wirtemberg, Hainault and Holland, furnished their contingencies. At the same time the citizens of Paris took arms, and, in the course of eight days, forged more than six hundred large iron chains, which were immediately fixed across the streets, and every night a watch was set of five hundred men. The army from Melun

moved, and took up a position on the bridge of Charenton. John then left the city, and drew up his troops in order of battle above Montfaucon. The



queen was in the castle of Vincennes, to which the Burgundians wished to lay siege. All the country to the south-east of Paris was covered with banners. On those of the Orleans party a knotty stick was seen, with this device: "*Je porte le défi*," (I bear a challenge). The Duke of Burgundy exhibited on his a plane, with these words beneath: "*Je le tiens*," (I accept it). At the moment when a battle was expected, peace was restored. The army of Louis was fewer in number, and the Duke of Burgundy was only faintly supported by the citizens of Paris, as the trades would not go to the camp at Montfaucon. A pacification being effected, on the 17th October the two dukes embraced at Vincennes, dismissed their troops, and entered Paris in state, side by side, where, in token of perfect amity, they slept the first night in the same bed.

The government resumed its ordinary course, and it was soon necessary again to speak of taxes and money; and then John Sans-peur, more eager than ever for popularity, as Paris had re-organised its militia, and recovered its street-obstructing chains, renewed his protestations and his pleadings in favour of the oppressed people. The quarrel was scarcely healed when it broke out again. The Duke of Orleans barricaded his hotel, and would not appear at council at the queen's palace but well armed, and often wearing a cuirass under his robe. A war with England came at that moment very opportunely to occupy the contending princes for some time. The Duke of Burgundy turned his attention towards Calais, whence the English ravaged the province of Artois. He made great preparations, and collected a vast

body of troops together, with abundance of warlike materiel ; and besides all this, applied himself to build a wooden wall to enclose the city, and starve it. But while he was occupied with his carpenters, the English re-victualled the place, and rendered it impregnable. Louis had conducted operations in the south with as little success, and after experiencing some reverses, he returned much chagrined to Paris.

Loud and bitter recriminations followed [1407]. Louis complained that he had been left to carry on the war without money, and John insisted that that money had been lost in Guienne, which ought to have been sent to assist his operations against Calais. Incapable of cordial union, the rival dukes were at length prevailed upon to consent that the supreme power should be placed in the hands of the dauphin—but this done, it was necessary for the dauphin, if he wished to exercise it, to declare for one or other of the dominant powers. John undertook to settle this question by force of arms. New troubles had broken out on the side of Flanders, where the people of Liege had risen against their bishop, John of Bavaria, the brother-in-law of the Duke of Burgundy, who had brought, two years before, two thousand men to Paris. John being pressed to assist him, visited his cousin of Orleans, who was then suffering from indisposition at the *château de Beauté*. He again became reconciled to Louis, and accompanied him to Paris on the 20th November, where they heard mass together at the church of the Augustines. The people, with great interest, beheld them kneel at the same altar, and receive at the same time the holy sacrament. Three days afterwards, on the 23rd, at about seven o'clock in the evening, the Duke of Orleans being then with the queen, at a little hotel which she had purchased near the gate *Barbette*, received a message from a valet of the court, one *Coutleuze*, that the king had desired to see him. He immediately got on his horse, and followed by two squires, sitting on the same animal, with five or six valets who carried flambeaux, he was leisurely passing through the old *rue de Temple*, singing, and playing with his glove, when he found himself suddenly surrounded by armed men, and received a blow from a battle-axe on his arm, which cut off his left hand. Not suspecting the snare which had been laid for him, he called out in the surprise of the moment, "I am the Duke of Orleans."—"And you are the man we have been looking for," was the significant reply. The next moment he was violently thrown from his horse, his skull split open, his brains scattered on the ground, and his body covered with wounds from swords and clubs. A little German page, who attempted to defend him, fell dead by the side of his master. The disturbance thus created caused some arrows to be shot from the neighbouring houses. A man who wore a red chaperon, which fell before his eyes, then came forward, and bending over the dead body of the prince, said to his companion, "Put out the lights, and let us away—he is dead." A crowd had already collected ; but the assassins fled, throwing behind them in the road iron traps or spikes, to prevent pursuit. The duke was found a corpse, and in a horribly mutilated

state. His skull had been cleft in two places ; the left hand was completely severed from the body, and the right arm remained attached to it but by a slender shred.

All hatred for the deceased vanished before this deed of blood. The magistrates exerted themselves to discover the perpetrators of the murder, but without success. The prévôt of Paris, however, came to the council, and declared he could discover the offender, if he were permitted to search the hotels of the princes. John turned pale at hearing this, and taking the Duke of Berry aside, confessed the part he had acted. "It was I," said he, caused it to be done ;—the devil tempted me." This confession filled the prince to whom it was made with horror, as it did the whole council when it was communicated to them, and its doors were immediately closed against the assassin. The Duchess of Orleans, Valentina, who, notwithstanding the imputed falsehood of her lord, seems to have been fondly devoted to him, came in tears to throw herself at the feet of the king, and call for justice on the murderer. She was accompanied by the late queen of Richard of England, who had now become the wife of the duchess's eldest son. Her appeal was thought to be irresistible, and justice was promised.

The remorse exhibited by the Duke of Burgundy, when he confessed his crime, was of brief duration. Though at first, from the sensation created, he judged it prudent to fly from Paris, to hide himself in his own dominions ; after a few days, it was clear that he was too strong to fear danger ; and he was soon pardoned by the Parisians, for having caused the death of the man who had subjected them to the horrors of a siege, and "the knotty stick has been scraped smooth by the plane," was the sneering commentary on the event whispered through the capital. John assembled three thousand men-at-arms at Amiens, and then marched to Paris, where he was received with acclamations, and the ancient cry of "Noel," with which the Kings of France were welcomed, as if he had been a king. The black deed, of which he was the author, he did not scruple to defend. On the 8th March, 1408, Jean de Petit, a doctor of theology, pleaded his cause, contending from scripture and history, that it was lawful to kill a tyrant, (*licet occidet tyrannus*) and blackening the character of the deceased, by accusing him of the most horrible crimes, and among others of having attempted, by means of sorcery, to destroy the king. It was gravely affirmed that, to accomplish this object, he had bribed an apostate monk to procure the enchantment of his sword, dagger, and ring ; and, in consequence, meeting the monk on the top of a solitary mountain, the solemn worship due to the Holy Trinity, was offered to the powers of darkness. Thus propitiated, two devils appeared to the supplicants, and gave to the objects placed before them the destructive powers solicited. The charmed ring was first to be placed in the mouth of a dead man, and then its deadly influence could not fail to prove fatal to its unsuspecting wearer. These charges were fully replied to on the part of the duchess, who, as capital punishment could not be inflicted on a member of

the royal family, demanded a sentence hardly less severe; as she prayed that John might be compelled to make public confession of the murder in various parts of Paris, surrounded by all the ignominious circumstances of an execution; have his houses razed to the ground, and be fined an enormous sum, which was to be expended in building crosses, hospitals, and chapels—on all of which the story of his crime was to be inscribed, to perpetuate his infamy for ever. The sorrowing lady, in satisfaction of her wrongs, received but fair promises, and John was eventually exonerated by the king.

His attention was now called to the situation of his brother-in-law, who, besieged at Maestricht by the people of Liege, was already reduced to the last extremity. The Burgundian army entered their country. Forty thousand men, at the call of the trades, immediately assembled in the market-place of Liege. The armies met near Tongres, about five leagues distant from that place. A battle was fought, which lasted for more than an hour and a half, and for more than half an hour, as John wrote to the Duke of Brabant, it was impossible to determine which side had the advantage. But the dense battalions of the citizens once broken, the slaughter was awful. Twenty thousand men fell under the walls of Tongres, on that day, September 23rd, 1408.

The parliament in Paris had issued severe orders against John, in consequence of his share in the death of the Duke of Orleans; but to set these aside, it was only necessary to shew himself after the victory he had just gained. The queen and princes of the houses of Orleans had not expected his presence in the capital. Twenty-five days before they had quitted Tours, taking the king with them. Favoured as he was by the citizens, John felt ill at ease in presence of royal authority, responsible as he was for the startling crime which had been committed, and which all good men joined to condemn. The deep despair of the duchess kept it fresh in every one's mind. She seemed but to live for grief and for vengeance. Her death, however, on the 4th December, paved the way for a reconciliation between the two families, and on the 9th March, 1409, it was concluded in form, and with great pomp, in the cathedral of Chartres. In pronouncing the words of pardon, which had been prepared for him, the son of the deceased duke had tears in his eyes; and the jester of John, in returning to Chartres, gave his commentary on the pacification thus effected, by concealing a piece of church plate, the cover of a chalice, in the furred lining of his dress, and calling it a *pair fourrée*, or huddled up peace.

John well understood what dependence was to be placed on the ceremony of the 9th March. Arrived in Paris, he proceeded to judge and to execute John de Montaigne, the superintendent of finance, one of the great friends of the queen, and of the late duke. He was seized by the prévôt of Paris, who put him to death. The unhappy man was hurried to the market-place of Maubert, and there being stripped to his shirt, his head was cut off, and his body hung by the shoulders on a gibbet. The duke then gained over to him

the dauphin, who had become duke, or Monsieur de Guienne, whose importance increased with his growing years, and who was already married to Michele, one of John's daughters. By his intrigues, the charge of his son-in-law was withdrawn from Queen Isabella, and given to him; and, at the same time, he obtained from the king a sort of voluntary abdication, in favour of the dauphin, and to the prejudice of the queen. The despotic conduct of the Duke of Burgundy at length roused all the family of the king. A league was formed against him by the Dukes of Bourbon, Berry, and Britany; D'Albret, who had succeeded Clisson as constable of France, and the famous Bernard d'Armagnac, who had long been the head of the Orleans faction in Gascony, and whose daughter now [1410] became the wife of Charles, Duke of Orleans. The confederates raised ten thousand men, and marched to Gentilly, where they fixed their advanced posts near the houses of the faubourg St. Marceau. Of these warriors, the most terrible were the Gascons of Count Armagnac. They were badly armed, and indifferently clothed; but they were animated by a raging thirst for booty, and Bernard, they declared, had promised them the pillage of Paris. All the army had adopted for a rallying sign the white scarf of the house of Armagnac. The soldiers of John displayed the blue chaperon of Burgundy, with the cross of St. Andrew, having the *fleurs de lis* in the centre. Their master had quartered eight thousand Flemings among the citizens of Paris, and having just received reinforcements from Britany, where the house of Penthièvre had declared for him, he waited with confidence for the Armagnacs to give up the blockade which they had attempted. In the end, the Duke of Berry, who managed the diplomacy of the Orleanists, effected an accommodation at Bicêtre, on the 2nd November. It was agreed that the princes should withdraw from public affairs, and leave the government in the hands of the dauphin, assisted by a council chosen by the king. John then returned to Flanders, and the Gascons were disbanded.

The treaty of Bicêtre did not prove more lasting than the pacification which had preceded it. The Duke of Burgundy still laboured under a debt of blood, which sooner or later he was destined to pay. On the 10th August, in the following year, he received a cartel in form from the Duke of Orleans, calling him to an account for the death of his father. Three days afterwards, a challenge was sent; and now, as it was clear that he could no longer hope for peace or truce with his enemies, John applied himself to form a strong military force in Paris, to secure definitively his domination. The Count de St. Pol, one of his warmest partisans, who had been recently appointed governor of Paris, procured the signature of Charles to letters ordering a levy of five hundred men, under the name of royal militia, and the care of forming them was left to the great butcher families, Legoix, Thibert, and Saint-Yon, a species of city potentates, who, from the commencement of the thirteenth century, had held, from father to son, all the slaughter houses of Paris. These chiefs selected principally young butchers, skimmers, surgeons, and others,

whose usual occupation made them familiar with blood, and paraded the streets of the capital, killing on the spot all who gave them displeasure. It was enough to seal the fate of any one they encountered, to raise the cry, "There is an Armagnac." In the course of a few days, more than three hundred of the richest citizens fled to Melun with Charles Cudoe, the prévôt of the merchants.

While the Burgundian party thus made themselves the terror of Paris, the Armagnacs took a cruel revenge in Picardy and elsewhere. Their ravages were carried to such an extent, that the court and the council could not remain neutral, and at length declared against them. The peasants assumed the cross of Burgundy, and formed ambuscades in the woods, where many



were slaughtered. John, whose presence was loudly called for, soon arrived, bringing with him fourteen or fifteen thousand Flemings, well-armed, and so well equipped, that they had twelve thousand carts with them. Of these, however, very many were empty, being destined to carry off the booty they expected to make. The two parties met once more at Montdidier; but it was remarked that all the great battles threatened at this period of everlasting war, came to nothing. At the moment when the Duke of Burgundy was forming his men in order of battle, the Flemish commanders came to announce that their men were about to return to their own country. During the whole night, the soldiers accordingly prepared their baggage; and, at break of day, their carts being harnessed, they burnt their tents, and raised

the cry of, "Let us go ! Let us set off !" John ran to them, and supplicated them with uplifted hands, to give him four days more ; but, deaf to his prayers, they filed off, and he was compelled to follow, leaving the field open to the Armagnacs, who, marching towards Paris, established themselves on the 11th October at St. Denis. A few days afterwards, they obtained possession of the bridge of St. Cloud, and pressing the city more closely, took possession of Montmartre and the village of La Chapelle. The Gascon bands having set fire to Bagnolet, the country house of the prévôt of the merchants, Legoix, to retaliate, burnt the beautiful château of Bicêtre, which it had been the care of the Duke of Berry, through his whole life, to embellish. The situation of the Parisians would have been very critical, if the Duke of Burgundy had not arrived at this juncture with some gentlemen from Picardy, and fifteen hundred English lances, commanded by the Earl of Angus, Sir Robert Umfreville, Sir John Guy, and the celebrated Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham. For the second time Paris endured the shame of owing its safety to these foreign defenders. This sacrifice of national dignity was deeply felt by reflecting men ; but, for the moment, it was necessary to avert the storm which lowered over the city. The populace received the English with acclamations ; and the next day they attacked the posts at Montmartre and La Chapelle, which were gallantly carried. They next moved on St. Cloud, where the Armagnacs were worsted, with a loss of nine hundred men, and this affair delivered the city from the danger which had menaced it.

A multitude of battles, of minor importance, marked the commencement of the year 1412, in Languedoc, Guienne, la Beauce, and the Orleans territory. On the 17th January, Charles, on a sudden, was once more restored to reason. To him it was most afflicting to learn what had occurred during his mental absence. Surrounded by Burgundians, he was led to denounce the Armagnacs, and already spoke of marching against them in person, when papers were brought to him which had been seized in the baggage of a monk who had sailed for England. These presented to his astonished eyes nothing less than a treaty, concluded in form, between the princes and the English king, Henry IV., who, indifferent in the choice of his alliances, had little difficulty in making friends with the white scarf and the cross of St. Andrew, so he could create disturbances in France, from which he hoped to profit. This discovery at once decided the king, who, instigated by the Duke of Burgundy, solemnly took the oriflamme from St. Denis, and advanced with an army into the lands of his uncle, the Duke of Berry. He besieged Bourges, where the duke then was. But the sympathies of the king were more for his old uncle, the protector of his infancy, than for John the Fearless ; and besides, his dislike was inflamed by knowing that he had killed his brother, and that maledictions had been invoked on his head by Valentina. Charles, on entering the territory of his uncle, had forbidden his soldiers to ravage the country with fire and sword, which usually marked all family wars. After a siege of one month's duration, he proposed to make peace. The

garrison had defended itself bravely, and sickness, which had invaded the camp, had already carried off two thousand men. Both sides engaged to observe the peace of Chartres, and to renounce the English alliance, just at the moment when the Duke of Lancaster landed at La Hogue, in Normandy, with fifteen hundred men-at-arms, and three thousand archers.

The peace thus made could not last. Charles had scarcely returned to Paris when he was again bereft of reason, and things took their wonted course. Still did the Duke of Orleans seek revenge for his father's death. The dauphin and the prévôt des Essarts were gained over to his party; and though he entered Paris riding on the same horse with the Duke of Burgundy, vengeance was uppermost in his thoughts. Bernard d'Armagnac had retired into his estates, where he made fierce war on the adherents of the king. In order more effectually to restrain the Burgundian party, the dauphin, who began to grow weary of acting the subordinate part assigned to him by his father-in-law, determined on attempting a *coup de main*; and on the 28th April, 1413, des Essarts suddenly took possession of the Bastille in his name. A horrible sedition instantly broke out in the city. The royal militia assembled, under the orders of Simon Caboche, a skinner, at the slaughter-house of the Hotel de Dieu, and who had been for some time recognised leader there. They ran to the Bastille, followed by a crowd



of the trades. De Jacquerville and De Mailli, two of the Duke of Burgundy's knights, marched at the head of the people, and did all in their power to

inflame them. Twenty thousand men approached the walls of the Bastille, while the compeer of Caboché, John de Troyes, the surgeon, posted himself opposite the hotel of the dauphin, of which he commanded all the avenues. Des Essarts surrendered, and was put to death. The dauphin, forced to give up his best friends to the butchers, some of whom were massacred on the spot, signed a few days afterwards the Cabochian ordinance, so called from the name of the individual with whom it was concluded, in which he consented to reform the finances of the state. As had been done by his grandfather in former times, he was obliged to wear the colours of his enemies, and these, after all, were but a feeble protection for the king and his son. One day the Duke of Aquitaine, looking from a window, his chaperon by accident fell from his head on his right shoulder, so as to have the appearance of a scarf. The butchers upon this raised a cry, "See, he converts his chaperon into the Armagnac band. He must do this to outrage us."

This odious tyranny was not limited to those connected with the court, but claimed a large sphere of action. Things were in this state, when the king again recovered his reason, and renewed his endeavours to effect a pacification. The principal citizens met at the Hotel de Ville, to receive ambassadors from the Orleans party, when Jacqueville and Caboché entered



the hall with their followers, and broke up the assembly, threatening the prévôt and aldermen to throw them out of the window, if they dared but to

speak of peace. The Cabochians lost themselves by this extravagance. The captains of the quarters took it up; and on the 2nd August a new meeting was convened at the Hotel de Ville. There the advocate, John Rapiot, a brave man and a good orator, spoke at great length on the advantages of peace. John de Troyes rose to answer him, when the cry "To the quarters" was raised. The butchers knew that there they would be overpowered by their opponents, the fraternity of carpenters. By their menaces they wished to prevent a step from being taken, which to them was likely to prove fatal. Henry, the son of John de Troyes, significantly called out three times that they were about to have a game at knives. But the impulse was given. "We shall see," said William Cirasse, a carpenter, "if there are not in Paris as many men who can handle the axe, as there are slayers of oxen." The crowd then proceeded to the quarters—only a few of the adherents of the Duke of Burgundy rejected peace, which was, however, so speedily concluded, that the princes appeared in Paris the next morning, and reprisals were promptly commenced against the Cabochians. On the ensuing Sunday, John the Fearless, pretending that he was going to chace the birds in the wood of Vincennes, departed with all speed for Flanders. He would willingly have taken the king with him, but this was prevented by the timely interference of the chancellor, Juvénal des Ursins.

Paris had now changed masters. At the opening of the year 1414, Charles of Orleans entered Paris in arms, accompanied by Bernard d'Armagnac and his terrible Gascons, who came to occupy the very spot in which the Burgundians had been established. Caboché and his companions having rallied after their flight, soon appeared at St. Denis and on the heights of Montmartre. The banner of the Duke of Burgundy was displayed as an invitation to the trades to take arms, but the violence of Caboché was too recent to make them feel disposed to respond to the call; and had it been otherwise, fear of Bernard would have kept them down. He traversed the city sword in hand, forbidding the people to approach the walls on pain of being hanged. The Duke of Burgundy having consulted his own safety by returning to Flanders, public feeling broke out against him with a violence not to be restrained. In their fury the populace exhumed the remains of John Petit, who had defended the duke at Hesdin, and who had died a year before, and burnt his houses in the porch of Nôtre Dame, where the doctor, Benoit Gentien, afterwards took up as a theme the defence of the duke, and refuted its argument point by point, amidst the acclamations of the crowd. Songs in derision of the Burgundians were sung in the streets, and children who were not able immediately to unlearn the old song which they had been taught,—“God keep thee, Burgundy, in joy” were beaten or rolled in the mud, when they heedlessly ventured on their old strain. Charles, who at this period had another interval of reason, did not hesitate in choosing his party. He wore on his shoulders the white scarf of the Armagnacs, and convoked the ban and *arriere* ban of the kingdom, and always preceded by

the oriflamme, now exhibited in Picardy the counterpart of his former expedition against the Duke of Berry. Compiègne and Soissons were taken, and afterwards he besieged Arras. A great number of the French vessels of John refused to serve against the king, for the royal person was much more respected in the north than in the south. Charles declared that he meant to despoil the Duke of Burgundy of all his fiefs; and Arras was about to surrender, when John manifested an inclination to submit, and sent to beg pardon of the king. The Orleans family were unwilling to allow him a hearing. The murder which he had accomplished was always present to their minds. In the end the Burgundians, through the medium of the dauphin, easily appeased the anger of the king, who, even in his lucid intervals, possessed but the reason and resolution of a child. He was alarmed lest the Duke of Burgundy should join the English, and rumours of war were now heard on every side. Henry IV. of England, a cold and prudent prince, like all founders of dynasties, had been succeeded by his son, Henry V., who was bent upon reviving the old claim of Edward III. to the crown of France. A treaty was concluded with the Duke of Burgundy at Arras, and ratified on the 15th of March in the following year, under which Arras and other places in Picardy were given up to Charles and Caboche. Jacquemille and their partisans were sent from the duke's estates, never to return to Paris, unless by command of the king.

On the same day the ambassadors of King Henry fairly made their demand. They claimed the full and complete performance of the treaty of Britany, with payment of 1,600,000 crowns, promised at a former period for the ransom of King John. Further, the English monarch demanded the hand of Catherine, the daughter of John, with a dower of a million of crowns, besides other moveables and jewels. Only one thing saved these extravagant demands from ridicule—the threat of war—which was denounced if they were not complied with. All attempts to soften Henry were vain. He remained inflexible, and after a sharp correspondence, sailed from England with an army, and landed at Harfleur on the 14th of August. He brought with him six thousand men-at-arms, and twenty-four thousand archers, besides a crowd of Welsh and Irish irregular soldiers, mounted on small horses, without saddles and without harness; but intrepid, ferocious, and ardent in the cause of plunder. He remained at Harfleur a month, and wasted time in reducing some small fortresses, and then deemed it expedient to make the best of his way to Calais, when the French army arrived, vastly exceeding his in numbers, to oppose his progress. Such was the confidence felt by the French princes in their strength, that they declined receiving the troops of the Duke of Burgundy; and six thousand men, offered by the city of Paris, were likewise refused. The Orleans party desired to have the honour of the expected victory wholly to themselves.

The pursuit commenced, and the English, now reduced to two thousand men-at-arms, and ten thousand archers, slowly directed their steps towards

Calais, when, on the 24th October, having just crossed the little stream of Ternois à Blangy, they found the French army before them, drawn up in order of battle between Rousseauville and Agincourt. Unable to proceed further, Henry encamped at Maisoncelle, in a space hemmed in between two woods, and prepared during the whole of the night for the battle. He posted in front the ten thousand archers which remained to him; the men-at-arms were placed in the rear and on the flanks. In front of the archers were thick pallisades of pointed stakes—the points inclining towards the enemy. The baggage was left at some distance, guarded by ten lances and twenty archers. The French army mainly consisted of cavalry; and the heavy rain which fell had soaked the ground to such a degree, that the horses sunk deep into the mire, and could hardly, by any exertion, be put into a gallop. The advanced guard, consisting of the noblesse, made a vain effort to break the English archers, but threw themselves on the pointed stakes prepared for their reception, through which their lances could not reach the enemy. Four knights alone burst through the pallisade, and instantly lost their lives. The first ranks forced to fall back, the rest of the army was thrown into disorder, while showers of arrows were sent by the English bowmen with fatal aim, to spread death and dismay among the confused and helpless multitude. But the moment had arrived when the archers could be better employed; and throwing aside their bows, they rushed through the pallisades on the foe, with their swords, battle-axes, and ponderous mallets, till then worn in their girdles, and with loud shouts assailed the French with a degree of impetuosity which nothing could withstand. Appalling was the slaughter then witnessed, for the archers used their murderous weapons with such activity and skill, that the French fell in masses, and heaps of dead were piled in different parts of the plain. To attempt to retrieve the fortune of the day was useless; but a daring attempt was made by the Duke d'Alençon to reach the English king. Eighteen knights had sworn to support him. They approached Henry's person. He was stooping to assist the Duke of York, who had fallen, when he received a blow from the battle-axe of the Duke d'Alençon on the helmet or crown which he wore, and which fractured it. The duke was instantly surrounded by the English, and seeing his danger, he called to his assailants, "I am the Duke of Alençon;" and offered to surrender. In the heat of the conflict his rank and his submission were not regarded, and he fell dead on the spot, at the moment when Henry was extending his hand to receive his gage.

The victory was now gained, and the English had only to select their prisoners from the princes and great lords of France. At that instant an alarm was given that the Duke of Brittany had arrived with six thousand men, and that the battle was instantly to be renewed. Henry, upon this, commanded that the prisoners should forthwith be put to the sword, and the order, to a great extent, was promptly obeyed. It was, however, untrue, that the battle was to re-commence. Some of the lords of the country, with a body of

peasants, had made an attack on the English baggage, and this it was that caused the prisoners to be slain. Henry lost the jewels of his crown and the chancery seals, but it was the expectation of a new attack that induced him to order the massacre of the prisoners. Those which still remained, with the captives subsequently made, amounted to fourteen thousand, and ten thousand men were left dead on the ground, eight thousand of whom were gentlemen. Charles of Orleans and the Count of Richemond, afterwards so famous, were found covered with wounds among the dead bodies, and being taken to the king, accompanied him to England, whither Henry found it necessary to return in order to raise a new army.

This great disaster was charged on the Armagnacs, who had not permitted any but their friends to assist in the battle. They now removed Charles from Rouen to Paris, and hastened to concentrate their troops in the vicinity of the capital, expecting the Duke of Burgundy would soon appear. Bernard d'Armagnac was called from the south to receive the sword of the constable of France, which had fallen vacant by the death of Charles d'Albret, who had fallen at Agincourt. He had scarcely been installed with his Gascons at Paris, when the Duke of Burgundy prepared to revenge the siege and the treaty of Arras. The article in it, by which he engaged not to approach Paris without an order from the king, was pressed on his attention at



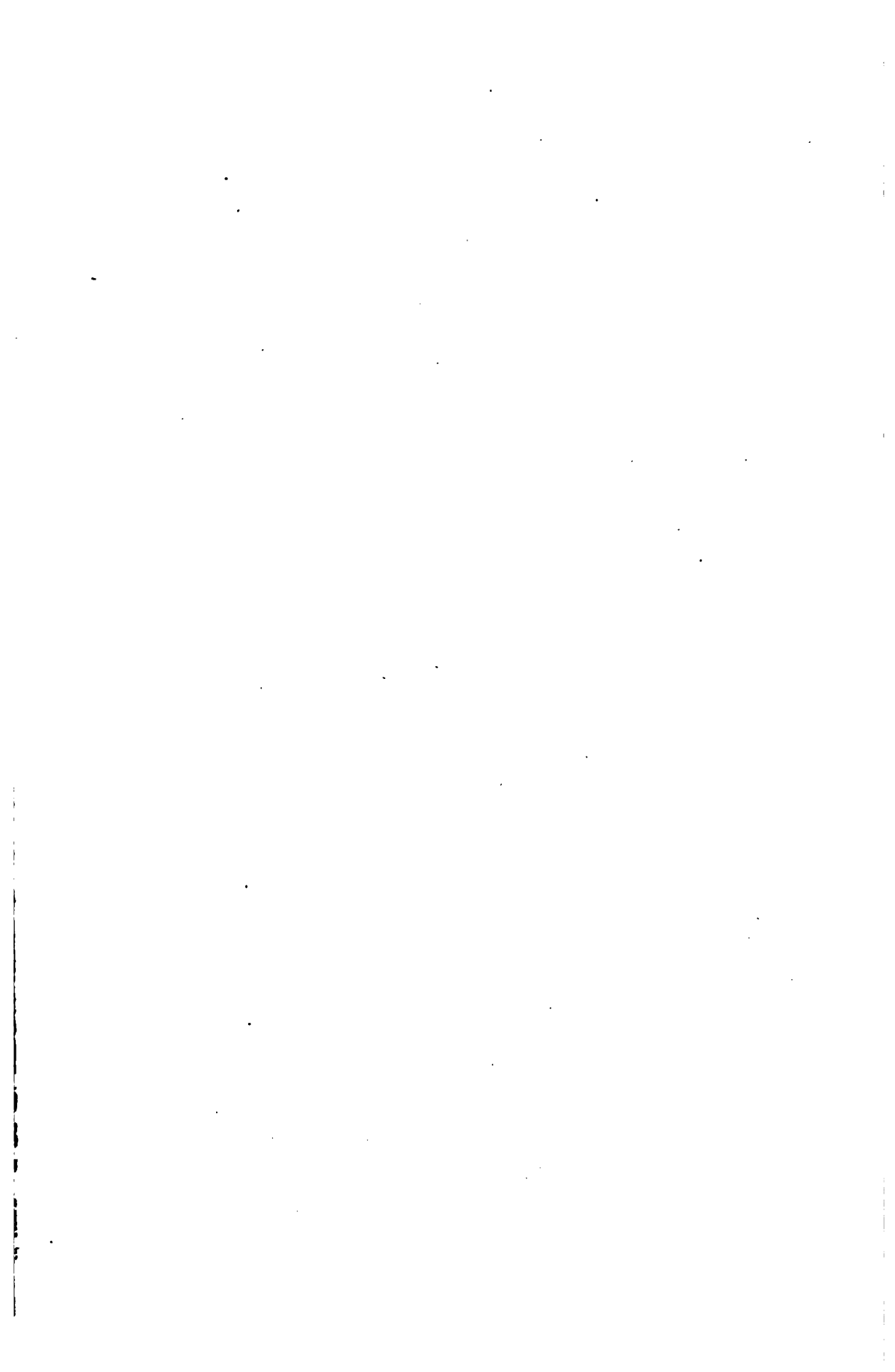
Provence by a parliamentary president, but he attached no importance to it, and advanced to Lagny, within six leagues of Paris, when he halted and

offered to negotiate. All his propositions were scornfully rejected, and his partisans were imprisoned or put to death. The Duke de Guienne at this moment breathed his last, and Bernard boldly seized on the whole authority which had been placed in the hands of the dauphin. The Duke of Burgundy still lingered at Lagny. His messengers passed backwards and forwards, but nothing was done. His continuing in this state of inactivity was the subject of many sneers, and instead of being called "John the Fearless," he was now called "John of Lagny," or "John the Loiterer." He was at length forced to retreat, and proceeded to Flanders in February, 1416.

Bernard availed himself of the present triumph to crush the Burgundian factions. The fraternity of butchers was dissolved; forty members of the university were sent into exile, and all assemblies of the trades were for the present suspended. Many fled from the city to rouse the drooping spirits of the Duke of Burgundy, who soon re-commenced hostilities by his companies in Burgundy and Picardy. He met the emperor, and the King of England, at Calais, and there seemed to separate his cause from that of France, by treating with Henry for Flanders and Artois. The new dauphin, however, John de Touraine, went to him in the month of November at Valenciennes, and after remaining there some days, declared that he would not return to Paris without him. This new ally was very soon withdrawn; for, having proceeded to Compiègne to negotiate with his mother, who was always attached to the Orleans party, he died in the beginning of 1417, from an abscess in the throat. John instantly published a manifesto, in which he accused the Armagnacs of having poisoned the dauphin. The prince, it was stated, being in a great perspiration after playing at tennis, a man, appointed for the purpose, had laid his previously envenomed hands upon his person, and thus caused the catastrophe. The manifesto was ordered to be publicly burnt by the parliament at Paris. Charles, a younger brother, who now became dauphin, was so much attached to the Armagnacs, that the serious charge preferred against them was by many thought to have some foundation, and this impression was strengthened by the tyrannical course generally pursued by Bernard. Looking into the private affairs of the royal family, he complained that Queen Isabella continued the pompous and sensual life she had formerly led with Louis of Orleans. Reports were circulated among the people of the great expenses incurred at Vincennes, where the queen resided. Following her example, it was said that her ladies wore head dresses, so enormously tall, that it was necessary to lower their heads when they passed through the gates of the palace. He also gave her annoyance on account of certain knights who lived very freely at Vincennes. One of them, Bois-Bourdon, was suddenly arrested, conducted to the Châtelet, and thrown into the river, secured in a leathern sack, on which "Let the king's justice be done," was inscribed. The household of the queen was reformed altogether. Her jewels were seized to meet the expenses of the war with the English. She was also despoiled of treasures which she had concealed in



Queen Isabella of Bavaria wife of Charles VI.



Paris and Melun, and sent to Tours *en petite compagnie* with her daughter Catherine, whose hand had been demanded by the King of England.

These measures caused Isabella to throw herself into the arms of the Duke of Burgundy. He was already calling for a general reform, and had prevailed on many cities to declare for him, when Isabella joined the Burgundians at Tours, and John immediately took upon himself, in concert with her, to organise an opposition to the dauphin. He caused a new seal to be made, appointed a new chancellor, and called a new parliament, which sat at Troyes, and another constable was named to supersede Bernard d'Armagnac.

The English had again entered France, and, led on by the conqueror of Agincourt, had possessed themselves of almost all the towns of Lower Normandy. Their progress was so rapid, that for a moment it suspended the rivalry which had divided the nation. An accommodation between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians was attempted by two cardinals, and they proposed that the Duke of Burgundy should share the government with the dauphin. When this was known at Paris, the Armagnacs exclaimed against such a treaty with one voice. A council was called by the dauphin, [1418] to take the subject into consideration, when an unlooked for event gave at once to the Burgundians all they claimed.

The tyranny of Bernard in Paris had been constantly increasing in severity. His partisans held all the places adjacent, and conducted themselves with as much domineering insolence as their master did. The king's servants, going to the bois de Boulogne to collect branches of trees for the fête of May-day, were beaten by some of his followers. Périnet Leclerc, an ironmonger's son, who had been struck by the servants of an Armagnac lord, unable to obtain justice from Bernard, swore that he would have revenge. His father, a captain of quarters, held the keys of the gate St. Germain. Having mustered his friends, many of whom were sons of butchers, Périnet sent to the lord of l'Isle-Adam, then commanding the Burgundian garrison at Pontoise, who in consequence, in the night of the 28th of May, presented himself at the gate of St. Germain, with seven or eight hundred horsemen. Périnet, having obtained the keys from beneath the bolster of his father, opened the gate to l'Isle-Adam, and conducted him and his men to the Châtelet, where four hundred citizens in arms waited to join them. In a moment, cries of "Long live Burgundy!" resounded through the streets; and crowds rushed forward to declare in his favour, displaying the cross of St. Andrew as their standard. Bernard saved himself for a time in a mason's house, but his retreat was betrayed, and the prévôt, to snatch him from the fury of the people, was compelled to carry him, sitting behind him on the same horse, to the Châtelet. The revolted ran to the Hotel St. Paul. Their cries of "Long live the king!" "Long live Burgundy!" reached the ears of Charles VI., who, unable to comprehend the occasion of the tumult, enquired of l'Isle-Adam how his cousin the Duke of Burgundy was. Notwithstanding his incapacity, he was paraded through the city, to make it appear that they had the royal

sanction for all that was done. At the first breaking out of the disturbance, Tanneguy du Châtel ran to the dauphin's bed, wrapped him round in a



sheet, and carried him in his arms to the Bastille. Thence he conveyed him to Melun, while the people were only thinking of murdering the Armagnacs in the streets; and on the 1st June he attempted a *coup de main*, to escape by the gate St. Antony, but was obliged to return to the Bastille, where a few days afterwards he surrendered.

Startling excesses followed. On the 1st June, a pewterer, named Lambert, with a remnant of the faction of the butchers, got up a cry that a body of Armagnacs had arrived at the gate St. Marceau, with the intention of liberating the prisoner made on the 29th. Forty thousand men assembled in the place Maubert, and in the neighbouring streets; and then proceeded to the prisons, where the Burgundian lords in vain endeavoured to restrain them. At the palace tower they murdered the constable, and his body was dragged through the streets, straps having been cut out from his skin across from right to left, to figure in derision the device worn on the scarfs of the Armagnacs, as if death, unaccompanied by revolting mockery, were too trifling a punishment to satisfy vengeance. One of the furies now let loose, went to the little Châtelet, and calling the prisoners severally by their names, caused them to pass through a wicket, where they were instantly dispatched with battle-axes or swords, and their bodies thrown into the street. The massacre was continued from four in the morning till eleven in the day, and was extended to all the prisoners in all



The Chateau de Montlhéry.

parts of the city. There perished thus fifteen hundred men, according to some accounts; others swell the amount to double that number. A list of more than eight hundred was returned to the parliament, while the servants of the Duke of Burgundy wrote to him that but four hundred were so disposed of. The arrival of the duke, on the 14th of July, with the queen, did not put a stop to the butchery. The populace, so violently excited, could not be restrained. On the 20th of August, the queen went to the Châtelet, and the prisoners there, after defending themselves for a time with bricks and stones, were in the end all killed. Capeluche, the common executioner of the city, led the movement, and cut off heads in the middle of the street. John, in order to conciliate him, took him by the hand in the midst of the crowd. But the



cry for blood was renewed from day to day; the duke himself began to be complained of as too relenting, and the people now turned their affections towards the queen. In the hope of restoring order, John sent six thousand of the most furious malcontents to undertake the siege of Montlhéry, and when they were gone he caused Capeluche, whom he had so lately noticed with favour, to be executed in the halls by his own valet.

While the Armagnacs armed themselves on all sides, Henry V. had re-entered Normandy, and his demands were now more exorbitant than ever. When the Cardinal d'Ursins went to him to speak of peace, "There is," said he, "no King of France but myself: God has brought me hither as it were by the hand." Towards the end of June, he encamped under the walls of Rouen, which held out till the 19th of January following. The inhab-

itants had been reduced to sustain life on dogs, cats, and rats, and were obliged at last to ransom themselves, as had been done at Calais, by the sacrifice of some of their number. Three of the principal citizens were given up to the English. Two purchased their lives; but the third, Alian Blanchard, who had been their leader, was immediately beheaded.

Henry now assumed the title of King of France, and began to coin money at Rouen. In the course of two months, the whole of Upper Normandy fell into his hands, and the English, spreading over Maine and Picardy, advanced to the gates of Paris. A truce was concluded between the duke and the dauphin, and an attempt was then made to treat with the English by the former; but Henry proved so inflexible, that the duke left him with a determination to seek a reconciliation with the dauphin. It was agreed that an interview should take place on the bridge of Montereau. At either end of the bridge a barrier was erected, and in the middle a wooden lodge. The duke was informed, while on his road, that the barriers were so constructed as greatly to favour the dauphin and his friends. Upon this he called a council on horseback, to determine whether it was expedient to proceed. Some of his partisans suspected a snare, but others maintained that no treachery was to be apprehended on the part of the dauphin. The duke, upon this, declared that "whatever God might ordain, his courage should never be doubted." Arriving at the first barrier, he was told the dauphin waited for him on the bridge. He then asked his attendants if they thought it safe to go on. They declared that they were ready to share the risk with him. He was accompanied by only ten persons. When they passed the first and second barriers, it was observed that they were severally closed, and locked by persons stationed for that purpose. Sir Tanneguy du Châtel, who had been instrumental in promoting the conference, now met him, and the duke, tapping him on the shoulder, said, "This is the man in whom I put my trust;" and moved on towards the dauphin, who, completely armed, was leaning over one of the barriers, and who, on seeing the duke, gave him no sign of affection or courtesy, but reproached him for breaking his promise by continuing the war. The duke had fallen on one knee before the dauphin, but Sir Robert de Loire, taking him by the right arm, said, "Rise, sir, you are too great a man thus to bend." The sword of the duke, while he was kneeling, having got too much behind, he put his hand to it in order to replace it, when Sir Robert fiercely exclaimed:—"What! do you put your hand on your sword in the presence of the dauphin!" Sir Tanneguy du Châtel then made a signal, saying, "It is time;" and struck the duke in the face with a small battle-axe, which cut off part of his chin, and brought him to the ground. John then attempted to draw his sword to defend himself, but the blows of the assailants now fell heavy upon him, and he was stretched on the ground, when Oliver Layet, assisted by Pierre Frotier, thrust a sword under his haubergeon into the lower part of his body.

The duke being thus dispatched, the whole of his attendants were made

prisoners, with the exception of the Lord de Nouaille, who was killed in attempting to defend his master, and the Lord de Montaigne, who leaped over the barriers and escaped.



It was proposed to throw the corpse of the duke into the Yonne, but the curé of Montereau interfered, and the remains were deposited in a mill near the bridge, and thence carried, still bleeding, on the poor man's bier to his own church. The Duke of Orleans was avenged.

John left behind him one son, then twenty-three years of age, Philippe the Good. In the first moments of his grief he hastened to Henry V., and, in order to disinherit the assassin of his father, made a tender to him of the crown of France. Isabella had so intimately connected herself with the house of Burgundy, that at this juncture she manifested nothing of maternal feeling. On the 9th of April, 1420, favouring the views of Philippe, she made her unfortunate husband, now sunk into a state of hopeless insanity, sign an act, by which he recognised the King of England for his successor, and appointed him sole regent of the kingdom. This treaty was submitted to the parliament at Paris, and not one voice was raised to oppose it, so much were all minds bewildered by the late murder. On the 21st of May the celebrated treaty of Troyes was signed, and a new epoch commenced in the history of France, this being the only instance in which a foreign invader had ever established himself under a legal form. Charles VI. was to retain the

title of king and the other attributes during his life, but not in any case to interfere with the government of the nation. The King of England caused money to be struck, with the inscription *Henricus Francorum rex* (Henry, King of the French). The treaty was published at Paris and in the other cities of the kingdom, and sworn to by the citizens, who were still too much attached to the memory of John the Fearless, to call in question the measures adopted by his son to avenge his death. To the dauphin little remained except the country beyond the Loire; but the cause of the nation was still his, and, sooner or later, was certain to triumph. Honourable men could not but revolt at the monstrous league formed by the victor at Agincourt with the wife and cousin of an insane king, whose unconscious hand had been made to sign away his own birthright and that of his son. Such reflections led them to regard with less horror the murder at Montereau. When Charles received in Touraine the decision of the parliament, it was addressed to "Charles, calling himself the dauphin." Against this, after the chivalrous usage of the time, he instantly appealed to God and his sword, and then commenced the unequal struggle between the last remnant of the Armagnacs and the victorious Burgundians, under their new leader. All for a time gave way before Henry, and Paris soon beheld the singular spectacle of the two kings entering on horseback side by side, to hear *Te Deum* sung at Nôtre Dame. Charles VI. rode on the right; but the cries of "Noël" that rose, as if to welcome the king, were intended for Henry and not for him; and the wealthy, on this occasion, wore scarlet robes in honour of the English.

This enthusiasm did not last. Money was soon demanded, and the haughty Henry, who always regarded France as a conquered country, was soon complained of everywhere. The university of Paris having on one occasion offered to interfere, he bluntly demanded of their deputies "whether they were Armagnacs?" Afterwards, while the new king was in England, having gone there to raise a new army of thirty thousand men, to keep down his pretended subjects in France, his uncle, the Duke of Exeter, seized in Paris the Lord de l'Isle Adam, who was disliked by the English for having frankly manifested his feelings for their arrogant sovereign. De l'Isle Adam had been a favourite with the people since the great night of the 29th of May, and a seditious movement was the consequence of his arrest; but the Parisians had now to endure a domination infinitely more rude than that of their own princes; and the Duke of Exeter caused his archers to pour their arrows on the malcontents, as fiercely as they had showered them on the French army at Agincourt.

The dauphin fortified himself in the south; and following the course adopted by John the Fearless in 1417, he opposed assembly to assembly, and caused subsidies to be voted to himself as legitimate heir to the crown of France, by the states general convoked at Poitiers. Five thousand Scotch, under the Earl of Buchan, joined him; and their first deed in arms was the glorious battle at Baugé, in Anjou, when the English were defeated, and the

Duke of Clarence, one of the brothers of Henry, killed with three thousand men [1421]. The Scotch already called the dauphin Charles VII., and the Earl of Buchan was named constable of France, who followed up his victory by capturing many places in Perche and Lower Normandy. Henry, on hearing of these disasters, promptly returned, and for a time attacked with success all the friends of the dauphin on the Somme and the Marne, and advanced to join the Duke of Burgundy. He was attacked by sickness on his march, and unable to mount his horse, was conveyed to Vincennes, where in a few days he breathed his last, August 31st, 1422. To confirm his possession of the crown of France, the English carried his body to St. Denis. They, however, were not content to leave the remains of a king, of whom they were so proud, in an enemy's country. He was removed with great pomp to Calais, and thence to Westminster. Fifty days afterwards his regal colleague expired at the Hotel St. Paul, surrounded by some old servants—all the members of his family being dispersed and far distant. The Duke of Bedford, brother to King Henry V., headed the funeral procession. He caused the royal sword to be carried before him as regent of the kingdom; and when the corpse had been lowered into the grave, by his order, Berri, the herald at arms of France, proclaimed, "May God have pity and mercy on the soul of King Charles VI., and long live Henry of Lancaster, King of France and England."

The inauguration of Charles VII. was less pompous. He was near Puy, in Velay, when he received the news of the king's death. He immediately repaired to the chapel with the noblemen about him, wearing their tournament dresses. Then raising on high the banner inscribed with the arms of France, all present shouted "Long live the king;" and the ceremony ended.

The war was now carried on with more violence than before, and every town in France was at the same time convulsed by the contentions of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians. In Paris, a plot was discovered to deliver the capital into the hands of Charles. Michael Lallier, the principal mover in it, effected his escape, but his friends were exposed to the cruel vengeance of the English. Bedford, to make himself more assured of their fidelity, compelled the Parisians to swear to him personally. The oath was exacted from all classes, servants and feeders of swine only excepted.

In Picardy, Normandy, and other parts, many battles of small note were fought with various success. Crevant, a fortress situate between Auxerre and Avillon, was besieged by the soldiers of Charles. Three thousand Scotch, under the command of John Stuart, constable of Scotland, joined with nine thousand French, under the command of Marshal de Severac, a body of Lombardy cavalry, and other auxiliaries. The fortress was likely to fall, when six thousand English and a strong body of Burgundians, sent by the widow of John the Fearless, came to its relief. After hearing mass, the English and their allies advanced, and a battle was fought; and while the French were engaged with the newly-arrived combatants, the garrison, falling

on their rear, threw them into disorder. They were completely routed, and left from three to four thousand on the field. The defeat at Verneuil, on the 27th of August in the following campaign, 1424, reduced the French party to the lowest state of hopeless depression. Before that place, the Earl of Buchan and the Earl of Douglas, who had arrived from Scotland early in the year, and four thousand five hundred men, laid down their lives, after a contest which lasted three hours.

A quarrel in the north between the English and the Burgundians, afforded the French some consolation after the disasters of Crevant and Verneuil. Jacqueline, Countess of Holland and Brabant, weary of her union with her cousin John IV., Duke of Brabant, an infirm prince of little capacity, corresponded with the Duke of Gloucester, who governed England while his brother the Duke of Bedford was regent of France, and having unexpectedly crossed the sea, they were publicly married. It had not entered into the plans of Philippe the Good, already uneasy on account of the great power of his English allies, that they should establish themselves thus in the heart of his estates in Flanders. He declared for the Duke of Brabant, and invaded Hainault, in despite of the letters and representations of the Duke of Gloucester, whom he defied to meet him in single combat. Philippe meant this challenge seriously. All his troops had moved towards the north, while Gloucester turned to his own profit the army at Calais. The Burgundian withdrew to his château at Hesdin, and wholly occupied himself in preparing for the personal encounter. Bedford, in despair at this untoward circumstance, censured the conduct of his brother, but in vain, and hostilities were but feebly carried on for the next three years on the banks of the Loire.

The royal party had now time for taking breath, and new defenders from day to day rallied round the standard of Charles. Offers of important aids came in from various quarters. The Count de Richemond, who had fought at Agincourt, had espoused his cause. Richemond, while in captivity, had married Philippe's sister, Madame de Guyenne, the widow of the first dauphin, and had thus become connected with the Burgundians, though always an Armagnac and a Frenchman at heart. After the battle of Verneuil, Charles offered him the constable's sword, which was vacant through the death of the Earl of Buchan. Richemond went to consult his brother-in-law, who at first demanded that all who were concerned in the murder of his father, and who remained about Charles VII., should be sent away; and as Charles hesitated to comply, the faithful TanneGuy was the first to sacrifice himself to the cause of his king. "God forbid," said he to Richemond, "that on my account so great an advantage should be lost." Not content with leaving himself the prince, whom he had carried in his arms on the taking of Paris, he compelled others to do the same, and went so far as to make his archers shoot one captain, his accomplice at Montereau, who had refused to depart. Many had pressed Philippe to seek a reconciliation with the king. The hatred of the English had never been so universal as it was

at this period, but Philippe paused on account of the wrongs of his family, to declare for his country. The bleeding corpse of his father seemed always in a manner placed between Charles and him. Richemond, however, ultimately prevailed over his scruples; and he at length came to Saumur, to render homage to Charles for his duchy on the 7th October, 1425. Bedford, upon this, immediately sent his soldiers into Upper Britany; and Richemond, to make a trial of his constable's sword, attacked St. James de Beuvron, where the invaders had established their head quarters. In the first instance, he found himself but indifferently treated by his new master. All the former counsellors of Charles had not disappeared from the court. The sieur De Giac, whom common report accused of having led John into the snare, now held the post which had been filled by Tanneguy du Châtel, and indicated the feelings of the king respecting that haughty submission which almost assumed the character of patronage. Scarcely had the constable appeared before St. James, when money was wanting. His letters were left unanswered; and the men-at-arms, badly paid, began to withdraw. Attacked by the English, while his army was in this disorganised state, Richemond had nearly been overcome. He returned in a rage to Issoudun, where the king was. That was not a time to shew respect for royalty, when royalty was at the



mercy of its defenders. On the morning after the arrival of the constable, his archers proceeded at an early hour to the house of the sieur De Giac, and

broke open the door. They snatched him half naked from his bed, and as they were carrying him out of the city, the guard of the king came up. "Do not interfere," said Richemond; "what we do is for the service of the king." The trial of the unfortunate Giac did not occupy much time. Carried to Dun-le-Roi, one of the châteaux of Richemond, he was soon convicted of every imaginable crime—even of having sold one of his hands to the devil; and was immediately thrown into the river. The constable then [1426] again repaired to the theatre of war, without troubling himself to learn what the king might think of the deed just perpetrated. On his next return from the army, he found the post which had been occupied by Giac, filled by a gentleman of Auvergne, Lecamus de Beaulieu, an intelligent and ambitious man. Richemond was not pleased with this appointment. The court being then at Poitiers, Lecamus was one day taking an airing on a mule, when two soldiers rushed on him and deprived him of life. Charles breathed threats of bitter vengeance when he saw the mule return without a rider, but suffered himself to be appeased; and, that he might be spared the pain of witnessing a third murder, Richemond himself named a successor to the last victim. His choice fell on Georges de la Tremouille, who had just married the widow of Giac, the former mistress of John the Fearless. Charles, who knew the domineering spirit of Tremouille, feared new violence, and for a time opposed the nomination, but at last yielded to the representations of the constable. "You give him to me, cousin," said the king, "but you will repent it; I know him better than you do."

And, in fact, a struggle instantly ensued between the constable and his favourite. Pontorson, which he had taken from the English, again fell into their hands. His military glory, already in some degree compromised, was eclipsed entirely by the exploits of Dunois, the illegitimate son of Louis d'Orleans, of whom Valentina had been accustomed to say, that "he had been stolen from her," and who, with only sixteen hundred men, had defeated at Montargis the English three thousand strong. At this moment John of Britany was hard pressed by the Duke of Bedford, who, advancing at the head of a powerful army to the frontier of his estates, called upon him instantly to choose between peace or war. Thus menaced, the Duke of Britany renounced the alliance with Charles, to espouse the cause of Henry. After this, terms were no longer kept with his brother the constable; [September, 1427] and when the foragers of Richemond presented themselves before Chatellerault, where he had agreed to meet certain lords, in order to concert the ruin of Tremouille, they were refused admittance by the officer who commanded for the king. He, upon this, withdrew with Madame de Guienne to her city of Parthenay, thus leaving a mournful void in the royal camp. The general prospects of France became more dismal from day to day. Such was the want of means experienced, that his treasurer writes at a somewhat later period:—"Reckoning all my master's money and mine, there were not four crowns in the treasury;" and in the "Vigiles of Charles VII," we

read, that La Hire and Santrilles, visiting the king one day, he could offer them nothing for dinner but two chickens and a loin of mutton. At the same time, the country extending to the Loire had become a vast solitude; there were no longer any inhabitants but in the woods and in the fortresses. Culture was neglected, excepting round the walls of fortified places, under the shelter of the ramparts, and within view of the sentinel. When the enemy came in sight, the alarm bells were sounded, and the labourers hastily retreated into the city; the flocks, the moment they heard the tocsin, from instinct, learned to fly of themselves, and retreated with the men to the gates for safety.

The defenders of expiring nationality, however, derived some hope from learning that the Duke of Burgundy was ill at ease with his English friends. Notwithstanding the consideration manifested for him by the regent, he had remained cold since the quarrel with the Duke of Gloucester; and Richemond, though in disgrace, sent messenger after messenger to his brother-in-law, to detach him from the English alliance. Bedford felt that he had no time to lose; and leaving behind him places that held out, north of the Loire, he resolved to seek the king at Bourges. Ten thousand English passed the Loire at Beaugency, under the command of the Earl of Salisbury, and encamped before Porteraux, one of the fauxbourgs of Orleans, beyond the bridge.

Orleans was the last hope of Charles VII. Happily, the plan of the Duke of Bedford had transpired, and preparations were made some time before to sustain his attack. The cities of the south had sent large sums of money to Orleans. A grant of 400,000 crowns had been voted by the estates assembled at Chinon. Rendered more conciliating by the peril of his situation, Charles recalled the exiled lords who were with Richemond, he himself alone excepted. He had proved himself too despotic a servant, for a king soon to have recourse to him a second time. The Orleanists welcomed with ardour the siege with which they were menaced. They taxed themselves. They destroyed Porteraux, that the English might find no quarters there; and the streets of Orleans were filled on a sudden with processions, in which the relics of saints were carried round the city, to excuse its defenders before hand to God, for all the disorders which they foresaw would occur in favour of the enemy.

On the 12th October, 1428, the Earl of Salisbury arrived, and commenced operations by carrying the fort of Tournelles, on the side of Sologne; but before he had had time to surround the city, Dunois threw himself into it, with Boussac, La Hire, Chabannes, and all the troops the king had been able to muster, French, Scotch, Aragonese, and Lombards. The earl seeing well that Orleans would hold out a long time, caused towers to be erected near the ramparts, with a view of reducing it by famine. He lost his life during the first days of the blockade. From the top of the fortress of Tournelles he was taking a view of the city, when a stone, from a throwing machine, carried away part of his face; and eight days afterwards he expired

at Meun, exhorting his officers to press the siege vigorously. The strife was continued throughout the whole of the winter with equal courage, without any great advantage being gained on either side. New reinforcements arrived every day for the camp or the city. In February, a Scotch force, consisting of four thousand men-at-arms, from Gascony and Auvergne, under the command of John Stuart and the Earl of Clermont, marched towards Orleans, just at the moment when Sir John Fastolfe was conducting an immense convoy of provisions and warlike stores to the English, the expence of which had been thrown on the city of Paris. Stuart and Clermont had concerted with the garrison to seize the stores in the course of their transit; but Dunois, having advanced too hastily, found himself in front of the enemy near the village of Rouvray; and while he waited for the army under Stuart and Clermont, to come up, the English general had time to form his troops in order of battle behind the baggage waggons of the army. The Scotch, who formed his advanced guard, compelled Dunois immediately to commence the attack. The knights of Dunois, little accustomed to the English mode of fighting, could not break through the pointed pallisades which the archers had placed in front, while the latter, at their ease, from behind them, and from the tops of their carriages, poured destructive showers of arrows on their assailants. The Scotch were not more fortunate. A troop of Gascons which had remained on horseback, threw itself in vain on one point of the enemy's line, defended by Parisian cross-bows. Confusion was created in the ranks of the French, and Fastolfe having put his archers forward, as was done at Agincourt, the rout became general. Dunois was wounded. John Stuart, with his brother William, were killed; and six hundred men were left dead on the field. Clermont had not taken part in the battle, which had been entered upon without his sanction. He afterwards deemed it useless to compromise the multitude with him, which, with those under Dunois at the commencement, made up a force of not fewer than eight thousand men, and saved himself, in some disorder, under the ramparts of Orleans, whither he was pursued by two thousand five hundred men of Fastolfe's army. The fortune of the siege was to all appearance decided by this fatal day, which was called "The battle of Herrings;" because the provisions which were sent off at the beginning of Lent consisted in a great measure of salted herrings.

Great uneasiness was now felt at the little court of Chinon, where Charles VII., reposing in the arms of Agnes Sorel, waited with too much philosophy, perhaps, to learn what would be the fate of Orleans and of his crown. The alarm of the city was great; and it was then recollected that the Duke of Orleans, who was a prisoner in the hands of the English, had long before, at the commencement of the struggle, obtained the consent of Henry's council to his states remaining neutral. They invited the Duke of Burgundy to take under his protection the dominions of his cousin, the Duke of Orleans. For reasons of his own he was willing to comply with their request; but when

he spoke on the subject to the Duke of Bedford, anxious as he had formerly been to conciliate the Burgundian, he now felt that he was strong enough to do without his aid, and sarcastically replied, that, "for his part, he had no taste for beating the bushes, that others might carry off the birds." In consequence of this and other circumstances, Philippe broke with the English, and recalled his troops which were before Orleans. But this could not save the city. The English had carried on their works on both sides of the river, and now they surrounded the walls. A range of double ditches intercepted all communication from without. Provisions began to fail, and notwithstanding the resolution of Dunois and his companions, Orleans appeared destined to share the fate of Calais and Rouen. All was consternation. It was suggested to the king to abandon the provinces of the Loire, and take up a position in some corner of the mountains of the south, and keep open a communication with the country through the chain of the Cevennes.

The cause of Charles VII. would have been lost had he followed these pusillanimous councils, to which, however, he is said to have lent a favourable ear. Popular tradition represents Agnes Sorel to have rekindled his drooping courage, and he bravely remained at his post that he might not blush before his mistress. Whether true or not, this glory has been assigned to the beautiful Tourangelle. Francis I. is believed to have given his comment on it in the celebrated verses, traced by his hand on a window in the Château de Chinon, which deserve a place here :

"More praises and more honour she deserved
Who fought the cause of humbled France so well,
Than she who never from the right had swerved—
The cloistered nun, or hermit in his cell."

These verses now belong to history. Their authorship is perhaps apocryphal, like the tradition on which they are founded, if a judgment may be formed from the style and orthography of some of the notes extant of "the father of letters."

After all, the influence of Agnes Sorel could only act on the king personally, and he was not the only one who wanted confidence. That which it was most important of all to re-animate was the army, demoralised by the fatal day of "Herrings," and the people, so dispirited before the English, that they thought no more of resistance. Another woman was destined to take upon herself the establishment of the king's affairs.

While the friends of Charles remained in great trepidation at Chinon, a poor young female from the country arrived at one of the inns of the city. She called herself Jeanne d'Arc, and had just left Domremy, her village, where, while she watched her father's sheep, she declared that she had heard voices, which assured her that it was reserved for her to restore to "the gentle dauphin" all his kingdom. For a time she had been regarded by her neighbours as mad, or as being a sorceress, but as much of her time she passed

in churches and in various pious exercises, the latter suspicion faded away. Jeanne proclaimed that she would walk her legs off to the knees rather than fail to restore France to what it had formerly been. "Though," said she, "I could prefer remaining to spin with my poor mother, I come forward. Not of my own movement do I act thus, but it is the will of my Lord." "Who is your Lord?" was then asked. "It is God," was her reply. When it was seen that she was so pious and determined, it was thought right to pay some attention to her. Her "voices" had directed her to assume male attire. The king's officer gave her a horse and a sword; and dressed as an inhabitant of the city, with boots and chaperon, she advanced beyond the Loire, under the escort of two gentlemen and one archer. "Go on," said they, "come what may."

Arrived at Chinon, after encountering many dangers, Jeanne had still great difficulties to surmount. The nobles looked on her with favour, and were charmed with her grace on horseback. But the civilians, members of the council, the born foes of enthusiasm, heard with coldness of "the voices" of the country girl, and of her mission from the Most High. They sent her to Poitiers, where she was examined by a commission of professors of law and theology. They embarrassed her by their enquiries, but could not shake her confidence. "I know neither A nor B," said she, "but I come from the King of Heaven." The examiners were still suspicious; and two monks were sent to Domremy to make enquiries respecting her former life. Communications were also made to John Gerson on the subject, and to the archbishop of Embrun, James Gelu. The latter wrote a treatise, in which he justified, by texts from scripture, the divine mission which the shepherdess of Domremy asserted to be her's. The queen and the Lady de Gaucourt satisfied themselves of her personal purity, and at length it was generally admitted that she was a spotless and holy maid. They put her on the footing of a warlike chief, with a page, a chaplain, and two heralds. She was armed from head to foot; but she would have no weapon but an old sword, marked with five crosses, which, unknown before, was said to have been found in a spot which she indicated, at the foot of the altar of St. Catherine de Fierbois. "Her voices," which had revealed to her where this lay buried, had also described what her standard was to be. It was to be formed of white stuff, adorned with *fleurs de lis*; exhibiting on one side two angels adoring the Saviour of mankind, and on the other the two names, Jesus and Mary. All was done according to her wish. The maid then repaired to Blois, where a large convoy awaited her arrival, which she immediately [April 28th, 1429], conducted to Orleans.

For some time nothing was talked of but this wonderful female, in the city and in the camp. The English, seized with a panic at her approach, abandoned the towers which they had built on the side of the Sologne, at Jean-le-Blanc, near the place where the French had loaded the boats, to carry supplies into Orleans; and the second evening after her departure, Jeanne

landed in the midst of the Orleanists, accompanied by La Hire and two hundred lances, the rest having taken the road to Touraine. On the 4th of May, another convoy approached from the side of Beauce. Jeanne and Dunois went to meet it, passing, with their standards displayed, the towers of the English, who, struck with a mysterious fear, dared not to act against the inspired maid. The besiegers were soon attacked in their turn, in the works they had raised, at the moment when a convoy was entering the city. Some men-at-arms, of their own accord, went out at the gates in broad day, and proceeded to assault the tower of St. Loup. Jeanne, returning from an expedition, had thrown herself on her bed to take a little sleep. On a sudden she awoke, and dressing herself in great haste, ran to the spot where the contest was going on. In three hours the tower was taken, and its defenders put to the sword. Jeanne was sorry to see so many men dismissed from life without being first confessed, and saved several from their impending fate, who were attired as priests in vestments which they had taken from the church of St. Loup. The seventh was the grand day of the siege. The Pucelle, as she was called, had commenced the attack on the side of Portereaux on the evening before. She crossed the



Loire in a little boat with La Hire, leading behind them by the bridle their two horses in the water. She headed the French in an attack on the tower of the Augustines, which, notwithstanding the efforts of Talbot in its defence, was taken and burnt. There only remained to the English the fort of

Tournelles, which was commanded by Sir William Gladesdale, one of their bravest knights. He fought nobly, scattering his foes with the long culverines which he brought to bear on them, while those who attempted to scale the walls were struck down with axes and mallets. About an hour after noon, the Pucelle took a scaling-ladder, placed it against the tower, and was passing up it, when an arrow hit her between the neck and the shoulder, and the point of it came out behind. She herself snatched the dart from the wound, and stepping aside into a vineyard, applied to it a preparation of oil and lard. Then, being alone, she addressed a prayer to God, and immediately afterwards returned, full of ardour, to the assault. The English were already in want of powder. The guns of the city had made great breaches in the walls. A carpenter threw a beam across the broken arch which separated the bridge from the first rampart of the Tournelles; and the men-at-arms arriving on that side, Gladesdale, who found himself between two fires, was obliged to withdraw to the interior, where he perished, with all his men. On the following day, Suffolk set fire to the towers on the right side of the river, and drew up what remained of his army in order of battle under the walls of the city, as if to invite attack. No notice was taken of this. The city, being delivered, thought only of rejoicing; and the Pucelle hastened to rejoin "the gentle dauphin," whose crown she had saved.

The time for argument and doubt was passed. Jeanne was received at Chinon as a heroine, and as a saint, and in compliance with her wish, Charles now sent her with the Duke d'Alençon and six thousand men against the English. The Pucelle had a presentiment that her time would be but short, "I shall last" said she, "but a year or a little more, and I ought therefore to be well employed." Jargeau, Meun and Beaugency, successively opened their gates at her approach; and while thus engaged, she entered upon the task of reconciling Charles to his constable, who had grown weary of repose, when the stirring scenes of the day roused his warlike spirit, and he had marched with four hundred lances and eight hundred archers, to impose, in a manner, his services on the King of France. At first the camp dared not to receive him, and he took up his quarters at la Sologne, apart from it. But all the old stories of the court were soon forgotten, when it was known that the famous Fastolfe (not Falstaffe as some of the French historians erroneously write) had arrived from Paris with six thousand men, and that he was about to form a junction with Talbot, who commanded the English army since the fall of Jargeau, where Suffolk was made prisoner. "Ah! noble constable," exclaimed Jeanne, on seeing Richemond, "you have not come here through me, but you are very welcome." He caused his standard to be carried forward, and saw his army with himself slide in, as it were, furtively to range itself under the Pucelle's command. They were then near the environs of Janville. The English advanced with great misgivings over immense plains. Arriving near Patay, at a place called Coigneés, while marching by the side of a hedge, a stag, disturbed by La Hire's men-at-arms,

dashed all at once amongst them. The French, apprised of the accident by their shouts, drew up in order of battle. A moment of fatal hesitation occurred in the English army. By some it was proposed immediately to fix their pointed stakes under shelter of the hedge, while others recommended that they should establish themselves at a place distant a quarter of a league, between a little wood and the strong abbey of the village of Patay. But the French advanced guard, coming up at a gallop, attacked the archers before they had had time to plant their stakes, and instantly routed them. Two thousand English fell on the spot. Of all their commanders, Fastolfe, who fled at the commencement of the action, was almost the only one that escaped. The disgrace of this day [June 18th, 1429,] so irritated Bedford, that he took the order of the garter from Fastolfe, which had previously been bestowed on the conqueror of Rouvray.

It was now the turn of the regent to be alarmed. The lover of Agnes Sorel, animated by success, appeared at the head of his knights. The Pucelle, who felt the time of her mission was fast advancing to its destined termination, continually pressed him to allow her to conduct him to Rheims. For that place he at length marched on the 28th June, at the head of twelve thousand men, full of ardour, and breathing defiance, taking his route through Champagne. It was the first time since the death of his father that Charles had seen the country on that side of the Loire. The Burgundian companies which guarded the cities at first held him in check. The garrison of Troyes detained him a whole week, and already provisions began to fail in the camp. His soldiers had been many days without bread, and were obliged to subsist on green beans which they found in the fields, and wheat ears from which the grain had been shaken. The chancellor wished that they should retrace their steps, but the Pucelle would not hear of it. She solicited three days, and taking her standard, led the troops to the ramparts, and filled the ditches with faggots and fascines. To these she added the boards which had served to lodge the men-at-arms—and was about proceeding to the assault, when the French party in the city, having become stronger than their opponents, threw open the gates; and the remainder of the progress to Rheims was but a triumphant march. The country people everywhere came to welcome their king, with cries of “Noel!” as in the best days of royalty. The citizens of Chalons sent by their bishop the keys of their city. On the 13th July, the king entered Rheims amidst the ringing of bells, and two days afterwards he was crowned King of France [July 8th, 1429]. During the ceremony, Jeanne stood at the foot of the altar in her warrior’s dress, her standard in her hand. After mass had been celebrated, she threw herself at the feet of Charles in tears, and exclaimed—“Gentle king, the will of God is now fulfilled.” The king being crowned, she conceived her mission at an end; “the voices” had prompted her to seek nothing beyond that. “I could much desire,” said she to Dunois, “that the gentle king would let me return to my father and mother, who would have great joy at seeing me once more. I

can again tend their sheep and cattle, and do for them all I was formerly accustomed to do." Disinterestedness, so touching and sublime, moved not



the counsellors of Charles any more than her original enthusiasm had done in the first instance. The Pucelle had become too valuable in war, for them to be willing to allow her so soon to return to her flock ;—and treating her like a true man-at-arms, they led her with the army on the side of Paris. But her inspiration was not to be prolonged, like a lease advantageously renewed at pleasure. The Pucelle, detained in his service by the prince who owed to her his crown, now acted against the feelings of her own heart, and felt that she was guilty of a profanation of the spirit of God ; and from that time forth she was no longer what she had been. She had ceased to believe in herself—her animation had passed away, and “her voices” were silent. To these circumstances, it may be added, the miraculous sword of Fierbois had been broken on their march, a symbol that the charm was dissolved. But, discouraged as she was, arriving at the gates of Paris, she did not act with less determination than formerly. She led the soldiers to the attack of the fosse, and there remained long after the knights had retreated. She at length returned in consequence of a wound ; but she perceived that the nobles, jealous of her influence, desired but to see her lost. Struck down by a blow from a stone while she was scaling the wall, she remained immovable,

and would that day have been taken by the English, if the soldiers, seeing what had befallen her, had not hastened to her assistance. In vain, to tranquilize her mind, did Charles ennoble her family, by changing her name from Jeanne d'Arc to that of Jeanne de Lys, an honour for which she never asked, and one of which posterity has taken no account. The poor girl felt that her hour was nearly come, and neither kindness nor flattery could soothe her troubled bosom. Shortly afterwards, being then in the city of Compiègne, which was besieged by the Burgundians and the English, she was thrown from her horse in a sortie which she attempted, and William de Flavy, who commanded, returned to the fortress without her, [1430]. The English, masters of the sorceress who had ruined their affairs in France, and whose name alone had made their archers in the provinces fly to the woods, when it was attempted to march them to serve in France against her, determined to make the unfortunate Pucelle pay dearly for her miraculous success. *Te Deum*, which, as Hume justly remarks, when speaking of this event, "has been so often profaned by princes," was sung at Nôtre Dame on the occasion of her capture. Happy would it have been if the English had done nothing worse. But the Duke of Bedford, though generally honoured as a prince of great capacity, on this occasion mournfully lost sight of what he owed to his own honour. He seems to have imagined that, by the cruel punishment of a captive female, he could revive the faded laurels of England. He ransomed the prisoner from John of Luxembourg, by whom she had been taken, and decided on bringing her to trial for a series of awful crimes, which were falsely laid to her charge.

In those days, when deeds were to be done that would make ordinary men

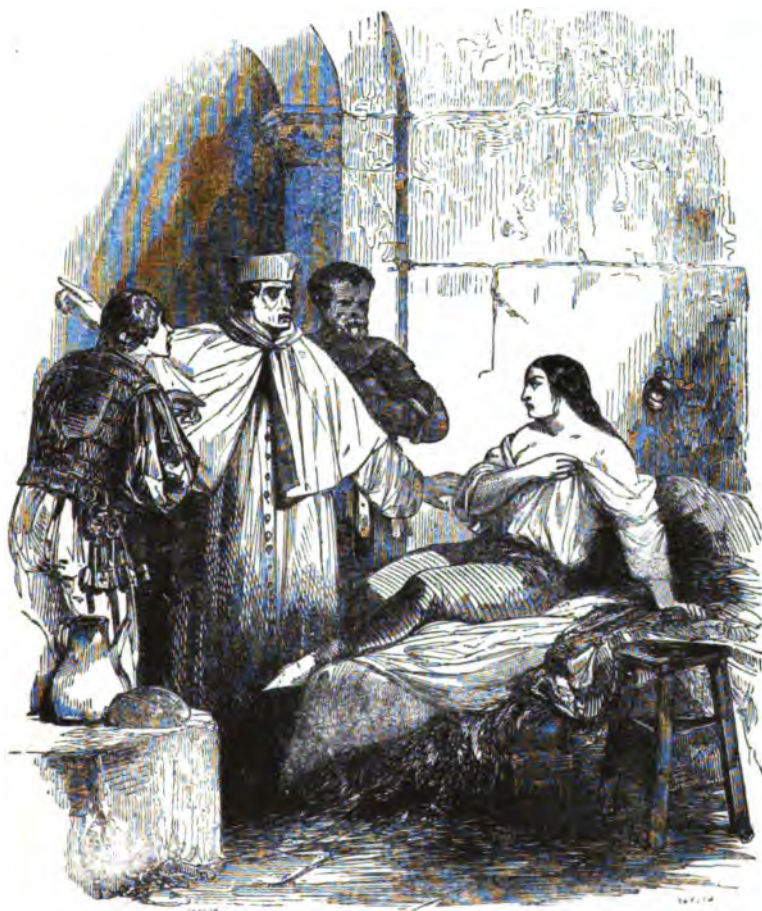
"Hold up their hands, and wonder who could do them,"

it is melancholy to remark, the ministers of religion were commonly brought forward in the front rank, to shut the gates of mercy on the unfortunates who were under accusation. It was so on this occasion. Jeanne, though she had acted an unusual part for one of her sex, could quote examples in that age, which were deemed illustrious, of females who had braved the battle's rage; and therefore she had as good a right, viewed simply as a warrior, to be treated with as much consideration as the Captal de Buche and Du Guesclin had received in the moment of defeat from their conquerors. A very different course was pursued with the maid of Orleans. The bishop of Beauvais, who was in the interest, and no doubt in the pay of England, claimed, as the Pucelle had been captured within the limits of his diocese, that she should be tried by an ecclesiastical commission for sorcery, impiety, idolatry, and magic. The university of Paris ignominiously supported this claim, and a tribunal of monks and priests was formed at Rouen, before which the unhappy Pucelle was compelled to appear. The bishop of Winchester, who had been named a cardinal, was the only Englishman found among her judges. She was accused of having sold herself to the devil; of having led a

dissolute life with the nobles of France—though her conduct throughout had been most exemplary and correct, and of having put forth, from time to time, false revelations.

The captive was heavily ironed when brought before this monstrous court. She requested to be released from her fetters; but having attempted to escape, by throwing herself from a tower since she had been a prisoner, the judges refused to grant the indulgence solicited. The examinations were continued nearly four months, during which period she was harrassed with a multitude of questions, to all of which she gave answers which bore on them the stamp of integrity, consistency, and courage. On the subject of her inspirations, they asked if she would submit them to the judgment of the church. Her answer was, that she willingly submitted them to God, the fountain of truth. They declared her to be a heretic, if she denied the authority of the church, upon which, she expressed a determination to appeal to the pope; but this her judges would not permit. All the questions put to her were answered with admirable frankness. Her object, she declared, was to free her country from the yoke of the English, and to place her king on the throne of his ancestors. But to such judges as she appeared before, truth and reason appealed in vain. She was condemned as guilty. Imprisonment, long suffering, and the furious threats of her enemies, at last overpowered her resolution. To escape death by fire, with which she was menaced, she confessed that her inspiration was false, or derived from the dread enemy of man. Her recantation was publicly made, and she was doomed to perpetual imprisonment, to the "bread of sorrow and the water of anguish." The sentence was, in the estimation of the Duke of Bedford, too mild; and his displeasure being made known to the tribunal from which it emanated, they soon took occasion to correct the error. The Pucelle had been compelled in her prison to resume the dress of a woman. Her armour was however left in her cell on one or more occasions; in heartless mockery placed within her reach. One fatal day, she was again found attired as a warrior. For this offence, for once more appearing in armour, she was again taken before her judges and condemned as a relapsed heretic and sorceress, immediately to expiate her crime at the stake. Pardon for her could be thought of no more; and the pure and gallant heart which merited a glorious reward, and all earthly honour, was mercilessly carried to the market-place, and there burnt to ashes, [June 14th, 1431]. Firmness and resignation signalized her last moments, and she died devoutly calling on Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary.

It must remain, for ever remain a deep stain on the memory of Charles, that he should have suffered the ill-fated Jeanne to perish, without making a determined effort in her behalf, after being so largely, so devotedly served. Not thus did his grandfather act by the faithful Du Guesclin. But perhaps Charles was tired of the instrument which had aided him so well, now that he might hope to proceed successfully without her co-operation, as submissions



Joan of Arc in Prison.

from all parts were announced from day to day. He only thought of following up his successes. Le Gatinois, La Brie, and all the cities of the Oise and the Marne, had recognised their king on his expedition against Paris. Richemond, pursued by court jealousies, notwithstanding the victory at Patay, had not been able to pass to Rheims, nor to participate in the triumphs which followed. He indemnified himself for it by making war in Normandy, it may be said in his own name. His brother, always wavering between France and England, always the slave of success, now inclined to Charles, in proportion as fortune declared in his favour. Philippe the Good, more and more unsettled, had begun to negotiate with the royal party; and had made such progress, that to recall him to the English interest, the Duke of Bedford did not scruple to resign in his favour the regency of France, and long and earnestly he entreated him, before he would consent to accept of it. Paris itself, the city of English domination, the Burgundian city *par excellence*, began now to forget its ancient hatred to the Armagnacs. At the commencement of 1430, a plot had been discovered, in which citizens, gentlemen, and counsellors of parliament, in short, men of all classes were concerned, to give up the city to the king. A hundred and fifty persons were arrested in Passion week. On the eve of Palm Sunday, six were executed in the halls. Jests however, were now freely passed by the fickle crowd on the conquerors, on those who, but two years before, had made all tremble before them. Even at the period of the plot, the party in power having made the unfortunate expedition to Lagny, it was reported in the halls that they had merely killed a cock, and when they returned, the scoffers whispered that it was only to confess themselves, and to keep the passover.

To prevent the defection of the Duke of Britany, Bedford gave him Poitou in October. In the month of March he had given Champagne and Brie to the Duke of Burgundy, for whom his new title of regent was not sufficient. These, however, were but illusory gifts, since the provinces were now under royal domination. Philippe once more broke from the English. All his states were in a flame. In some parts of Burgundy they had not been able to reap any harvest for two years. In Flanders, the men of Liege declared war; and he had other enemies to contend with on the side of Lorraine, where he supported the Count de Vaudemont against René d'Anjou, who was in the interest of Charles. Thus pressed, a truce for two years was signed on the 8th September, and negotiations for peace were opened at Arras. Not knowing how, by any other means, to awaken the sympathies of his former allies, Bedford had recourse to a grand pageant. The young king, having been brought over from England, on the 2nd December 1431, the son of Henry V., the invisible monarch, in whose name war had been made, was paraded with great splendour through Paris, and received, as the former kings of France had been, with shouts of "Noel." The aldermen carried a canopy over the head of the young prince, and each of the trades held the strings of it in their turn. They carried Henry to Tournelles, where he was

to dine, and, as the cortege passed before the Hotel St. Paul, Queen Isabella was seen at a window. The royal child was told to look on his grandmother. In that moment the two shadows gazed stedfastly on each other, the pale young one took off his chaperon and saluted the old queen, and she, making a humble reverence to him, turned aside to weep. It was



a sad spectacle for the widow of Charles VI., to witness the enthusiasm of the scene in which she had no part, at the moment in which that son triumphed whom she had deserted. The presence of a stranger, whom they were forced to call their king, added to the discontents of the people. When the day named for the coronation, the 17th December, arrived, it was clearly manifest that Henry was not the real king of the country. All was confusion and dissatisfaction, with no symptoms of attachment. A foreign prelate, the Cardinal of Winchester, crowned the young king at Nôtre Dame, in contempt of the rights of the Bishop of Paris, who never forgave the English that affront. After the ceremony, those who assisted at it were to dine on the marble table in the palace; but the English, who took upon themselves to arrange every thing, were so negligent, that a mob rushed in and seized the best seats. Aldermen, doctors of the university, and presidents of parliament, a grave and arrogant race, found themselves at the feast mixed up with shoe menders, vagabonds, and the lowest of the

low. The king at length returned to Rouen, where Bedford thought he would be in greater safety, without having taken off an impost, liberated a



prisoner, or made any donation to the Hotel de Dieu. The citizens regretted the expences to which they had subjected themselves on the occasion, and scornfully declared, that "when a goldsmith or any rich citizen married his daughter, he gave, out of a private individual's purse, more than the English had done in honour of their king's coronation." It was however necessary on this matter not to speak too loud.

Each day was marked by some new reverse. Henry was still at Rouen, when the city had nearly fallen into the hands of the French. The château was already secured, and perhaps the conspirators would have seized even the king, when they quarrelled among themselves about the booty, and the attempt in consequence proved abortive, [3rd February 1432]. At the commencement of the fine season, Dunois took the field with three or four thousand men, and commenced operations by seizing Chartres. A secret understanding subsisted between him and Sarrazin, a Jacobin preacher, who drew all the people to his church at one end of the city, while two merchants, John Conseil and the *petit* Guillemin, presented themselves on the opposite side. They halted their carriages under the gateway, and gave two chad fish to the citizens who were on guard, and engaged them in conversation. Dunois, in the mean time, came up with great speed at the head of his soldiers. His appearance was wholly unexpected, and he entered the city

almost without opposition. In Normandy, Ambrose de Lore, one of the boldest partisans of the French army, had insulted the English at St. Michael, in the very faubourgs of Caen, at the moment when the celebrated *union fair* was being held at Bourg-l'Abbé, and, in the face of the garrison, made more than four thousand prisoners. A new blow, struck by Richemond of his own accord, served Charles VII., in spite of himself, by hastening a reconciliation with the Dukes of Burgundy and Britany. The constable, to gratify his hatred of the English, had always fought against them, but he grew weary of playing the part of an importunate servant, which La Tremouille assigned to him. A love intrigue this year gave up Montargis to the English; and this furnished a pretext to renew a league against the favourite minister, which had failed in 1426. All the preparations were made in the château of Richemond at Parthenay. La Tremouille was with his master at Coudray, near Chinon. Forty or fifty Bretons, commanded by the nephew of the constable, arrived during the night under the walls of the château, the governor of which, being in their favour, opened a back door to them, by which they passed to the chamber of La Tremouille, who leaped out of bed on perceiving them, to defend himself. He, however, was disabled by a thrust from a sword. They made him a prisoner; and Charles, seeing him no longer, forgot him in a short time. Charles d'Anjou, his brother-in-law, filled his post; and through him Richemond at length received a pardon from the king, whom he had treated with so much rudeness. With Richemond, Britany was gained over to the interest of Charles; and negociations were resumed more actively than ever in the conferences of Arras, 1433.

The English could effect nothing against an enemy who thus gained strength in the midst of the most embarrassing disorders. The provinces which remained under their domination were impatient to throw off the yoke. Recent disasters having discouraged the English archers, the peasants of Normandy were compelled to supply the place of reinforcements, which no longer came from England. In Lower Normandy, there was a revolt among the peasantry, which, however, was caused by the distress which prevailed, rather than by any sentiment of national feeling. In a few days, from fifty to sixty thousand men, conducted by the sire de Quatrepié, did not scruple to appear before the walls of Caen. There a horrible massacre took place; but Ambrose, who was to put himself at their head, came too late to render this movement of any advantage to the royal cause. Great popular masses are dissolved as easily as they are formed. The Earl of Arundel, who commanded in Normandy, had treated with the most influential of the peasants, who began to return to their cabins. Those who obstinately remained in arms, were extirpated by Arundel at St. Sauveur, on the banks of the Dive. Still, the popular irritation was so great, that scarcely had the revolt been put down in Lower Normandy, when a rising took place in the country of Caux. A gentleman named Carnier assembled more than twenty thousand peasants,

who spread themselves over the neighbouring lands, and committed great excesses—excesses carried to such an extent, that in a short time neither men nor women were to be seen in the country, all having been compelled to seek shelter in the fortresses. They however soon disbanded themselves, and then went different ways as chance directed, to plunder other countries. The war was continued amidst these convulsions, but with more obstinacy than vigour. Richemond, towards the close of the year 1434, commanded in the west, where he thought of bringing on a general action, but the two armies came in sight of each other at *Sillé le Guillaume*, and separated without fighting. The Earl of Arundel had approached to besiege the fortress, and the commander, Aimery of Anthenèse, wishing to avoid the evils of a siege, agreed to surrender in six weeks, if the place were not sooner relieved. The constable directed his steps thither, at the head of the noblesse of Normandy. This only led to a few skirmishes, as on the day which had been named, at the hour of noon, the succours having appeared, the English, according to the terms of the convention, withdrew. This was all that Richemond wanted. He only desired to make good the engagement of Aimery, because, for a long time, the French had had the character of not relieving their fortresses when besieged. In other respects, he set so little value on the place, that the next day he was disposed to burn it, and to decapitate the commander who had thrown upon him the task of defending it.

While these things were passing, the Duke of Bedford died, on the 14th September, 1435. Left alone, he, for a long period, by his address and the concessions he had made, kept the Duke of Burgundy faithful to his engagements with the English. His death broke the last tie which connected Philippe with foreigners. Six weeks afterwards, he signed the memorable treaty of Arras, which terminated the long quarrel between the Armagnacs and Burgundians, so fatal to the best interests of the kingdom, since the English had taken part in it. It was not, however, gratuitously, that the son of John consented to forget the tragedy of Montereau. Maçon, Auxerre, Gieu, Boulogne, Péronne, Troyes, and Montdidier, were given up to him; and he was exempted, during life, from all homage and subjection to the King of France. Charles also made the *amende honourable* for the murder of John the Fearless, by engaging to erect on the bridge where it had been committed, a stone cross, elegantly sculptured, to be maintained for ever at the expense of the king. Not content with thus perpetuating his own shame, the monarch authorised his immediate vassals to serve the Burgundian against him, if he should ever violate the treaty. The cardinals of Cyprus and Sainte-Croix sent, the first by the council of Bale, the other by Eugene, discharged Philippe, in the church of St. Waast, from all oaths which he had made in favour of the English. Afterwards he swore to the new peace on the crucifix, and all the French and Burgundian lords took the oath after him. When it came to the turn of the sieur de Lannoy to touch the crucifix, "By this hand," he exclaimed aloud, "I have sworn five times to a peace

during the course of the present war, but I now promise to God that, on my part, *this* peace shall be kept, and I will never break it." Charles, on receiving the treaty, assembled the states immediately at Tours, took the oath in their presence, and caused *Te Deum* to be sung. "It is long," said he to the ambassadors from Burgundy, "that I have languished to behold this happy day; it is fitting that we should thank God that it is come at last."

It was about the same period that Queen Isabella died at Paris, poor, and abandoned by all. Desertion may be said to have followed her to the grave. John Giffart, her counsellor, and Happart, her confessor, led the funeral procession. The corpse was followed by one German lady and some young



females belonging to her household. They placed the coffin in a small boat, with four attendants, which conducted it to the isle St. Denis, and the monks, to whom, when dying, she had given her little country house at St. Owen, got up for her, as well as they could, a service in their desolate abbey. Eight days before, the English had seized on St. Denis, which had fallen to the king in 1429. The monks, who had given their silver dishes to the French, to enable them to carry on the siege, remained exposed to the violence of the enemy, who had destroyed everything in the city but their abbey and one tower, which they called the tower of Venin. One day a troop of English soldiers were passing by St. Denis while mass was being celebrated. The soldiers halted and appeared to listen, but being in a hurry, after a few minutes, a reprobate fellow, finding the service tedious, stepped on the altar and snatched the chalice and ornaments, and his fellows at the same moment

acted a like part, and broke up the sacred relics to possess themselves of the gold and silver in which they had been set, and then continued their march, carrying off their booty. These violences now approached their termination. In the spring of 1436, Richemond appeared under the walls of Paris, with six thousand men. While he laid siege to the tower of Venin, a great movement was planned in his favour in the city, where the tyranny of the English had at length become intolerable. The prévôt, Simon Morhier, who had sold himself to them, had organised a despotic system of superintendence, which disgusted all the trades. Nobody dared to appear in the streets without the red chaperon, the ancient rallying sign of the Burgundians, which had now become that of the English, as the white scarf of the Armagnacs had given its colour to the royal standard. The Parisians could not leave the city without a safe conduct and if they did not return by the hour named in it, they found the gates closed. Often in the night, those who lived on the banks of the Seine heard dead bodies thrown into the river. So much were the English in dread of treason, that they threatened to punish with the rope all who approached the walls, who were not of the guard. They, however, could not prevent the hatred generally felt for them from bursting forth. Michael Lallier, the chief of the plot of 1422, got up a new conspiracy, and sent to apprise the constable of it, and to recommend him to present himself with his people at Chartreux. Richemond crossed the Seine at Pontoise, and concealed his foot soldiers at Notre Dame-des-champs, which almost extended to the walls; and then, silently moving behind the Chartreux, he caused some men-at-arms to advance towards the gate St. Michael. There, a man from the rampart made a sign with the chaperon, and called to them:—"This gate does not open: go to the gate St. Jacques; there is work for you to do in the halls." Those who were in charge of the gate St. Jacques had not the keys, but they let down a great ladder, and l'Isle Adam was the first to mount it, carrying the white banner in his hand. He recollected the time when he had taken Paris from the king's party, by the famous *coup de main* of 1418. The fastenings of the drawbridge having been broken, the constable entered at the head of his men-at-arms, who shouted as they advanced, "The city's won." The prévôt and the English, assisted by a remnant of the ancient faction of the butchers, strove in vain to defend it. They put chains across the streets; stones, logs of wood, and all sorts of furniture showered on them from the windows. They shut themselves up in the Bastille, and soon offered to capitulate. The people were so exasperated, that it was necessary to make them pass out by the side of the fields, and embark for Rouen behind the Louvre. They could not, however, escape the hisses of the populace, who waited for them by the gate of St. Denis, and followed them to the river side, with exclamations of hatred and contempt.

Philippe wished to remain neutral for some time after signing the treaty of Arras, but circumstances compelled him to abandon this resolution. The English, from Calais, having overrun his lands, he revived the hostile projects of

his father and grandfather against them. He raised a force of thirty thousand Flemings, and prepared, with much parade, to besiege that advanced post of the enemy, which seemed to hold out against his dominions an eternal threat. The siege lasted a month, and as yet a fleet which was expected, had not made its appearance to blockade Calais on the side of the sea. It came at length, on the 25th July, and sunk before the port old ships, filled with stones and huge anchors of lead. At low tide, however, the garrison destroyed the carcasses of the sunken vessels, and the waves carried away the stones. The fleet could not remain long off Calais, the coast being most dangerous, and it therefore sailed for Holland. The Flemings, finding the siege thus protracted, began to murmur, and talked of returning to their homes. A certain mason, named Zaghère, master of the trades at Ghent, declared, more energetically than the rest, in favour of their retreat. Disaffection instantly spread through the camp. Zaghère was the first to strike his tent; and every one hastened to follow the example, staving the casks of beer and wine which they could not take with them. They did not even allow themselves time to carry off their artillery, which fell into the hands of the Duke of Gloucester, who landed the next morning with ten thousand men.

This check, at one extremity of the kingdom, did not affect the general progress of the royal cause. Charles VII. who valued his royalty, finding that it was something more than a vain title, resolved on discarding that indolent philosophy which he had previously exhibited; and the rival of his commanders, he now led in person his men-at-arms to battle. Paris desired his presence; but before making his appearance there, he wished, by some dazzling exploit, to merit the welcome which the citizens were prepared to give. Taking with him six thousand men, he laid siege to Montereau-sur-Yonne, a city of tragic celebrity. Sir Thomas Guerrand defended the fortress bravely. Even after a practicable breach had been made, he resisted the French army for more than eight days. The Yonne filled the ditches which surrounded it, and rendered the approaches very dangerous. But the hour of assault being come, Charles threw himself into the midst of the danger, and advanced sword in hand, and above the middle in water. He sprang on the ladder which had been prepared by Bourgeois, the favourite soldier of Richemond, one of those subaltern heroes, who only want the command of an army to render them illustrious, and appeared in the breach before all his people. The incident was too striking not to inflame the minds of his followers, who rushed impetuously forward, and carried the place. Charles could then shew himself at Paris with the greater confidence in the reception which awaited him, as he had, in a manner, fought for the Parisians themselves, as the garrison under Sir Thomas had intercepted the carriage of all commodities from Burgundy to Paris. From Montereau he marched to St. Denis; and on the 12th of November, Paris at last received the king within its walls. The scene was one of memorable interest. "Many honest men," says Barante, "wept for joy at beholding the king, their true and natural

lord, with his son, the young dauphin, re-enter the good city, after so long an absence, and so many calamities." Tears also filled the monarch's eyes, at witnessing the transports called forth by his presence. The prévôt of merchants, the bishop with his clergy, the university and the parliament, all went to meet him, and to carry to him at La Chapelle the keys of the city, Thence to Nôtre Dame, the eye rested but on a series of splendid hangings and joyous spectacles. Before St. Lazare, there was exhibited a masquerade on horseback, in which the seven theological and cardinal virtues, and the seven capital sins were represented. Four aldermen waited for the king at the gate St. Denis, bearing a canopy of cloth of gold, beneath which he



continued his route. A child appeared suspended in the air, dressed as an angel, and carrying in his hands the crown of France on an azure cushion, decorated with *fleurs de lis* worked in gold, while, at the same moment, an invisible choir caused the following strains to be heard, which breathe anything but that of the former spirit of Marcel and Legoux :

" Most noble king and mighty lord,
Your subjects in this city try
To welcome you with one accord,
And very great humility."

Merely to recall to Charles the fact that the citizens received him with perfect good will, from the porch in front of Nôtre Dame, the bishop presented him with the book of the holy gospels; and the gates were not opened

to him till after he had sworn on them, that "he would with sincerity and good faith, apply himself to do all that a just king ought to do."

From this day Charles VII. really commenced his reign. The part of king, which he then began to act, was dignified and severe; his policy cold and positive, and sometimes manifesting ingratitude. The kingdom was in fact recovered from the English. There only remained to expel them from a few places, held by the garrisons here and there, in Picardy, La Champagne and La Maine, and, from their two great provinces of Normandy and Guienne, a severe and difficult task it is true, but one that was made light of by those who spoke on public affairs at Chinon. The most painful labour, however, was to restore to order those bands of adventurers, the successors of the "grand companionships" of former times, the real governors of France, and who were the more insolent now, as they had borne the brunt of all the recent wars, and might boast of having placed the king on his throne. The crowd that had enabled Richemond to capture Paris, was almost wholly composed of skimmers (*écorcheurs*), that being the *soubriquet* which they had received from the people. The leaders of these brigands were not all persons of no substance, as, besides Floquet, Fortepice, and Perrin Grasset, who had given up La Charité to the English, they reckoned among them some celebrated names in war, Rodrigue de Villandrada, Chabannes, Ambrose de Lore, and La Hire himself, the companion in arms of the Pucelle. La Hire, who dined with the king, was, like many others, but a captain of *écorcheurs*. This state of things, more than anything else, was the subject of royal solicitude. At that time the whole kingdom was exposed to plunderers, and the misery of the people was great in the extreme. At Abbeville, a woman was burnt for having cut the throats of her little children, salted their flesh, and exposed it for sale. Whole streets in Paris were deserted, and wolves entered and prowled about in open day, and devoured women and children, till the court of accounts thought it necessary to offer a reward of twenty sous, for the head of each wolf that was produced. In 1439, Charles convoked a meeting of the states of Orleans, to consider of the means of abating evils so serious. There was but one feeling on the subject of the excesses which had been witnessed; and a few days afterwards, a very good, but severe ordinance, in the form of a law and general edict, perpetual and irrevocable, was published, in order to compel military men to observe better discipline. Some had taken a train of valets, and some as many as ten baggage horses with them. They were now restricted to three horses; and the archers were only allowed three horses between two men. Disorderly females, who had followed the camps in great numbers, were sent away. It was forbidden to the soldiers to allow their horses to feed on green corn; and they were prohibited from seizing the oxen of the farmer, as also from taking the timbers of his house for firewood. But the enactment, more important than all the rest, was one that forbade commanders, from that time, to raise companies, without being first authorized

to do so by letters patent from the king. Those which were then in existence were subjected to royal authority; and if they broke the ordinance, the citizens and peasants might proceed to execute them, without waiting for the interference of the officers of the king. Undisciplined men—persons who had been arbiters of everything in France for nearly forty years—were not likely to give up the privileges which they claimed without resistance. They were sustained by the names of their former commanders, Dunois, Vendome, the Count d'Alençon who had countenanced their course of proceedings, some of whom felt already ill at ease in the presence of a royal administration, re-constructed on the spur of the moment, by the severe and haughty hand of the constable Richemond. Scarcely had the edict of Orleans made its appearance, when the eminent individuals just enumerated abandoned the king, and repaired to Blois, where the leaders of the *écorceurs* soon rejoined them. Charles strove, but in vain, to detain them: "You know," said he, in a paternal tone, to Chabannes, "that the English and the Burgundians call Blanchefort and you captains of skinners."—"Sire," Chabannes replied, "when I skin your enemies, you gain more by the skins than I do."

The dauphin was at this period but eighteen years of age; but political partialities were already violently manifested by that prince, who was, at a future day, to become Louis XI. Eager to play his part, he suffered himself to be gained over by Dunois, and he took the command in that moment, which gave rise to a war, which had for its object to undo the work of the Pucelle. Their rising was called the *Praguerie*, an out of the way name, of which no explanation has ever been given; but Lenglet and Ducos suppose that it was adopted in reference to the doings of the Hussites at Prague, whose insurrection, at that time, commanded the attention of all Europe. Richemond, who formerly viewed royal authority with disdain, defended it on this occasion with as much energy as he had put forth against it in other days. The head quarters of the dauphin being at Niort, Richemond joined the king at Amboise, where he found Charles much disturbed in mind, passing his nights in sleepless anxiety, and much inclined to seek a secure asylum in some strong place. "Sire," cried the intrepid Breton to the monarch, "do you recollect the fate of King Richard? It was through being shut up in Conway Castle, that the son of the great Edward lost his liberty and his crown." The king having taken the field, the military revolt which had given him uneasiness was dissolved, as if by enchantment. The Duke of Bourbon flatly refused to favour the Pragens, and would concede to the dauphin no favour but this, that he would send to the king to solicit his pardon. Dunois was the first to withdraw from the revolvers; but the dauphin remained firm; and following the Duke of Bourbon into his duchy, he endeavoured to resist the troops of the king, but was at length obliged to submit; and the Duke conducted him to Cusset, where the king waited to receive him. At the distance of half a league from the city, it was

announced to the gentlemen of his suite, La Tremouille, Chaumont and De Prie, that if they went further they would be arrested. "By God," exclaimed the irritated prince, "if the king will not pardon the people of my household, I will not go to him." He however went on without his friends, and endeavoured to plead for them with Charles, at the same time threatening to withdraw, if the king persisted in visiting them with his vengeance. "Louis," said the father, "the doors are open ; and if they were not wide enough for you to pass through, I would have fifteen or twenty feet of wall thrown down, to give you, if you desired it, a free passage hence." He then turned his back on the prince, and instantly ordered a reform in his household : which was carried out with such strictness, that he only left to him his confessor and his cook [July, 1440].

The English had taken advantage of these disorders to besiege Harfleur, which surrendered; but this misfortune was more than counterbalanced by the capture of Conches, Louviers and St. Germain-en-Laye, which foreigners till then had held, close to the gates of Paris, and many places in Champagne. The wounds of the country were rapidly healing; and it was a great day for the French court, when they beheld, restored to his friends, that unfortunate Prince, Charles of Orleans, who, by a captivity of twenty-five years in England, had expiated the crime of being only half killed at Agincourt. It was the Duke of Burgundy who had negotiated his release, and made himself liable for two-thirds of the sum which was to be paid for his ransom. On their first meeting, they rushed into each others arms, and exchanged the collars which they wore, of the orders of their two houses; the "porcupine" and the "golden fleece." The Duke of Orleans affianced himself on the spot to Maria of Cleves, the niece of his cousin of Burgundy. Their friendship was carried so far, that it gave the king some uneasiness; and when the newly returned prince was preparing to join Charles on the other side of the Loire, he received an intimation, that the unnecessarily numerous cortege of Burgundians that usually attended him might first be dispensed with. The duke, upon this ungracious hint, withdrew into his own dominions.

The task of the "ex-king pretender" became more serious, in proportion as he became more securely fixed on his throne. But if the "King of Bourges" had formerly declined the cares of royalty, the King of France now resolutely accepted them. After his inheritance was secured, there was one thing which it was more difficult to recover, his authority, which had been laid aside among the captains who had been his companions, and the princes who had been his protectors. The edict of Orleans, generally approved of as it had been, for having annihilated *Praguerie*, was but little respected by the skinners, in whom it inspired resentment rather than terror. On his way to Paris, the Duke of Orleans caused one ruffian to be hanged, who had been in the habit of throwing little children into the fire, when their parents refused to ransom them. One poor man came to

complain to the king, that the bastard of Bourbon had shut him down in a bin, on which he outraged his wife, whom he subsequently murdered by beating her to death. For this crime, the bastard was tied up in a sack, and thrown into the river at Bar-sur-Aube.

In the midst of these disorders, amidst the throbs of discontented ambition, Charles did not care to confide to any one the command of his army, and took upon himself to direct the war against the English, which was no longer the most important business that demanded his care. Creil and Pontoise opened their gates to him; but not till after a vigorous resistance. He himself fought in the breach at Pontoise, and it was on his side that the ramparts were first forced, [1441]. Thence he hastened to Saintonge and Poitou, and triumphed at the same time over the English and the plundering commanders, who had again disturbed the country. In the west, all was soon pacified. At this period, it became necessary to enter on some delicate negotiations with the houses of Burgundy and Orleans, who whatever their professions, were almost on the eve of a revolt. To win over the second, who came to him at Limoges, Charles was obliged to pay 140,000 francs, and to grant him a pension of 10,000 livres. The English forced back to their own coasts, from year to year, strove in vain against their ill fortune. In 1443 Talbot, their great general, encamped under the walls of Dieppe, but was repulsed with loss. Guienne had been wrested from them; and Tartas, Dax, Tonneins, Marmande and La Reole taken by the royal troops. The house of Armagnac, faithful to their former insubordination, having wished to assist the enemy, the dauphin reduced their chief in a single campaign, and forced him to take from his public instruments, the proud style which he had adopted, "by the grace of God, Count of Armagnac," [1443].

The council of England unable to continue the struggle, at length made overtures for peace. On the 20th May, 1444, a truce, for one year, was concluded at Tours. This offered Charles a happy opportunity for relieving himself from those annoying bands which thronged his camp. But he had to fear, lest disbanding them, they should spread themselves over the provinces, and renew the outrages of the "grand companies." Some skinners already, wearing masks, had appeared in various parts of the country and had robbed the merchants. Charles VII. had recourse to the expedient adopted by Charles the Sage. René d'Anjou invited him to assist in chastising the city of Metz, which had revolted. On the other side, his aid was invoked by the German lords, who were striving against the Swiss leagues, another citizen power, not less formidable than the communes of Flanders; and the nobles of France, with their king, were expected to join with them, in what they held to be the common cause of chivalry. They asked for ten thousand lances; Charles sent them fifty thousand men, in which number, eight thousand English or Normans were included, furnished by the King of England, who saw with pleasure this capricious and turbulent

force engaged in such a contest. Mathew Goche, their commander, marched with Floquet, the well known company chief, and had nearly fought their first battle on reaching the frontier of Burgundy. All the gentlemen of the country had taken up arms at their approach, to prevent the army passing through their estates. Floquet declared he would march straight forward, saying it would appear that they had mistaken him for a fowl merchant. Already the opponents were within sight of each other, when it was agreed that the troops, or skimmers, under Goche and Floquet, should turn off to Langres, the place of general rendezvous. There the force was divided. The dauphin, named chief of the expedition, led twenty-two thousand men against the Swiss; the rest proceeded to Metz. The French advanced on Bale, where they encountered, on the banks of the Birse, sixteen hundred men, sent from the Swiss army to succour the fortress. This was a new enemy, whose mode of fighting at first surprised the men-at-arms. The Swiss were provided with pikes of enormous length, as well as huge sabres, which they grasped with both hands, and wielded with gigantic power. They engaged like furies, not attending even to the voices of their commanders. At the first rencounter, all gave way before them. In the pride of triumph, instead of entering the city, they remained in the open country; and their troops were soon surrounded and divided. One portion, enclosed on the bank of the Birse, was extirpated, after making a desperate resistance; and the other entrenched itself in the hospital of St. Jacques, within sight of Bale, the inhabitants of which vainly attempted to assist them. The dauphin's army was drawn up in the meadow of St. Alban, between St. Jaques and the city. The artillery arrived, the culverines immediately threw down the feeble walls of the hospital, and the Swiss were almost all killed, without deigning to ask for quarter. Each of those who fell had brought five or six enemies to his feet. There was but one man of the Swiss who escaped without a wound, and he, when he returned, was treated by his countrymen with contempt. The rage of these modern Spartans ended but with life. Burckardt Monch, a German lord, who had joined with others to invite the French to their country, after the battle, went over the field on horseback. One of the captains of Uri was stretched on the ground in a dying state, "We shall sleep on roses to night," exclaimed the German lord. "Well," exclaimed the dying man, "eat this then," making a desperate effort to throw a large stone at him, which he found within his reach. The missile struck Burckardt full in the face, beating in his eyes and forehead. He fell from his horse, was carried away, and died three days afterwards.

The dauphin, who had lost ten thousand men in this affair of out posts, entered immediately into a compromise, and went on with his soldiers. While he ravaged Alsace without danger, his father, from Nancy, directed the operations of the siege of Metz. The governor valiantly defended his charge, sparing neither friends nor enemies;—he massacred his prisoners and drowned the women of the city, who carried to the camp a ransom for

their husbands. When the people heard in the streets the bell of his little horse, which announced his approach, they all ran into their houses. After



striving some months against this desperate foe, Charles was of opinion that he had drawn off enough bad blood from his army. In 1445 he sold a peace for 200,000 crowns to the people of Metz, and recalled his companies exhausted and decimated. The moment seemed to have at length arrived for putting an end to this unmanageable soldiery, and the ordinance of Chalons-sur-Marne gave it the finishing blow. It kept up fifteen companies of a hundred lances, which were called "ordinance companies." The principal chiefs had been induced to favour the plan, and the command of the fifteen companies was given to them. The rest were disbanded, with an order to the soldiers to withdraw, each to his own country. Archers waited for them on every route, and formed so good an escort, that they pursued their journey without creating any disturbance. At the end of a fortnight nothing more was heard of them. The whole kingdom was delighted, but it had to pay for the benefit. An annual grant was claimed to cover the expence of the companies which had been kept up, and the same year saw established the two great institutions on which the whole edifice of modern society is built, a regular system of taxation, and a standing army.

Devoting his attention to the internal affairs of the kingdom, during some years he made no effort to renew the war against the English, but in 1449 he thought it time to deliver the nation from the remains of an expiring

invasion, which might be revived in a moment by a revolt. Francis l'Arragonnais, one of the former commanders of the king, who had joined the English since the downfall of the companies, having taken Fougères, the Duke of Britany claimed assistance from the King of France, and Charles resumed hostilities in Normandy. From the manner in which preparations were made for war on this occasion, it will be seen that the nation had recovered from the effects of that long period of disorder, which followed the death of Charles V. The parishes had raised a large body of French archers, each furnished with a coat of mail, a sword, and a cross-bow. All the appointments were most complete, and the artillery, under the direction of the brothers John and Gaspard Bureau, presented itself in admirable order. "Such a host, so well provided with cannon, powder, carriages, and every requisite for an army, and so regularly paid from day to day, had never till then," says John Chartres, "been possessed by any Christian king." The royal treasury, however, it must be stated, already greatly in debt on account of the expenses of the new ordinance companies, had not the means of bearing the expenses caused by such a force—but these were all defrayed by one wealthy individual, Jacques Cœur. This man, the son of an inhabitant of Bourges, had been the friend of Agnes Sorel, who had got him named silversmith to the king. Jacques Cœur caused the south to resound with his commercial renown. At Marseilles, Montpellier, and Beaucaire, he gave the tone to the market. A fleet had been formed of all the ships he had at sea, and his factors in the Levant treated with the various Saracen states. The merchant potentate used nobly his immense fortune. Devoting it to the service of the nation, he consented to the king drawing on him without limit, on the condition that the sums taken from his coffers should be applied to effecting the conquest of Normandy. Through this assistance, four armies at the same moment entered Normandy. The people in the cities, impatient to throw off a foreign yoke, compelled their garrisons to capitulate. At Rouen the citizens flew to arms and promenaded the streets, displaying the white cross, and shouting, "Long live the king." On the 10th of November, Charles entered the city, surrounded by his generals; but amidst the throng of distinguished personages there to be seen, the people looked but for one man,—a pacific clerk, whose cuirass consisted simply of the armour of preparation. That man was Jacques Cœur, who now appeared by the side of the king, having the same right to be there that the Pucelle had possessed at Rheims, for the recent conquests belonged to him, at least, as well as to his master. After Rouen, other places surrendered to the king. A body of English, commanded by Sir Thomas Kiryel, landed at Cherbourg, and formed a junction with the force, at the head of which was Mathew Goche, and the other chiefs of the bands established in the country. Richemond arrived at the same time from Britany, joined Clermont, and attacked the English at the passage of the Vé, on vast sands situate near the mouth of La Vire, which were not fordable but at low water. Sir Thomas crossed,

and advanced to establish himself in the village of Formigny, 1450. The archers immediately set up their celebrated palisade of iron-pointed stakes, but these proved but a feeble defence against that development of the growing power of the French artillery, which was now to be witnessed in the hands of the brothers Bureau. The Count de Clermont caused two culverines to advance, which opened on the English lines, till Matthew Goche darting forward with five or six archers, dispersed the escort and seized the guns. At that moment the army of Richemond debouched from the side of St. Lo, took the position which had been carried by the English, and turned their entrenchments. In three hours the battle was won, and three thousand five hundred English remained dead on the ground; fourteen hundred were made prisoners, and the conquest of Normandy was completed without difficulty. On the 22nd of August there remained to the foreigners but Cherbourg. Richemond soon made himself master of that by means of the new invention as directed by the Bureaus. He caused batteries to be built on the strand, in such a position that they were covered by the sea when the tide was up, but which were so well supported by gabions that they were never overthrown, and both the guns and the casks of powder were secured in such a way, that the water never entered either. Bourgeois met with his death there;—the man who had opened the road to Charles VII, at the siege of Montereau. He fell by a shot from a culverin. At the end of August Cherbourg opened its gates to the besiegers. One year had sufficed to fulfil all the engagements of Jacques Cœur.

There remained still the cities of the south; Bordeaux, Bayonne, and various small places found in that country of fortresses. Counts de Foix and De Comminges had begun already to operate on that side, against the English. In 1451 the army of Normandy proceeded to Guienne, in the same order and with the like discipline. Dunois, who commanded, had scarcely any occasion to fight. England was at that time too much agitated by apprehension of the wars of the white and red roses, with which she was threatened, to interest herself much for possessions beyond the seas. As for the people of the country, time had destroyed their anti-national sympathies, which had formerly made them friendly to foreigners. After the surrender of Blaye and Montguyon, the Bordelais sent a deputation to Dunois. They stipulated for a court of justice, a bank, and the maintainance of their ancient privileges. These conditions being assented to, the bastard of Orleans entered Bordeaux on the 25th of June, at the head of twenty thousand men. Among those who formed his cortege, there was a prévôt of farriers, called Tristan l'Hermite. Two months afterwards, Bayonne, the last asylum of English power in that kingdom, surrendered after a siege of three days, on the 20th of August. At the moment when Dunois moved forward to make his entrée, there was a cry in the city that a white cross could be seen in the sky. Some went further, and declared they could see Christ, with a crown of thorns on his head, which changed into the *fleurs de lis*. "It is God!" exclaimed the

people, who wills that we should abandon the red cross, and again become French." France had now re-conquered its whole territory ; but notwith-



standing the enthusiasm displayed, the former masters of the country had many friends remaining, especially in the city in which the Black Prince had reigned. The English bought the wines of Bordeaux, and brought over their fine cloths and long wool in exchange. The royal treasure was seized ; and everywhere the agents of the government encountered the most energetic opposition. Moved by the reproaches of the English, Margaret of Anjou, who felt the humbled throne of the feeble Henry sinking beneath her, wished to oppose the progress of her countrymen. A plot was formed in Guienne. The sieur Lesparre crossed the sea to announce that Medoc was prepared to declare against the French. Margaret, upon this, as a last effort, collected a force of five thousand men, under the command of Talbot, who was considered the best captain in the English army, though he was now eighty years of age. Talbot embarked on the 17th October, 1452. The seventh day after his arrival, the Bordelais rose against their garrison, and opened their gates to the old soldier of Henry V. Talbot's son joined him in the course of the winter, with an additional four thousand men, and several places in the vicinity of Medoc were captured by the English ; but in the month of July following, Charles appeared at the head of his ordinance companies in the revolted country, and carried on hostilities with a degree of activity which almost partook of the character of spite. He was incensed against this fickle people, which had repeatedly called him again to the lists immediately after he had quitted them. At the capture of the fort de Chalais, fourscore of the inhabitants were handed over to Tristan l'Hermite, who hanged them without mercy. On the other side, the French estab-

lished themselves under the walls of Castillon, in a camp strongly fortified by the brothers Bureau, who directed all the sieges. Talbot, sent to oppose him, advanced to the enemy's entrenchments, and boldly planted his banner within the first enclosure. Once more the artillery gave victory to the French. The English men-at-arms were thundered on by this new power, which was now much more formidable than the dreaded arrows of the English archers had been in former times, and they fell by whole ranks before the ditch. Talbot in vain went from rank to rank, on a little hackney, to animate his men. A shot from a culverine broke his thigh, and killed his hackney, which falling, threw him on the ground, and terminated the battle. Dunois immediately advanced, and dispersed all those who were collected round the English chief. Talbot's son fell defending him; and a volunteer archer, by thrusting his dirk in the wounded chief's throat, put an end to his life. On the next morning [July 17th] the body of the old general could scarcely be recognised, it was so disfigured by the numerous wounds he had received. His herald at length approached a corpse supposed to be his, and putting his finger in the mouth, felt for the place of a tooth which Talbot had lost, and did not feel for it in vain. The body had been stripped during the night. "Ah, sir, my master," exclaimed the servant, having ascertained his identity, "it is then you! May God pardon all your sins! For forty years and more I have been your herald at arms, and have worn your coat, and now I give it back to you." He then took his coat of arms,



and covered the remains of the lifeless Talbot. This day brought the war to a conclusion. All the cities which had received the English again, were speedily retaken; and the army proceeded to sit down before Bordeaux. The

river was full of ships, furnished to Charles VII. by Spain, Britany, Flanders, Holland, and Zealand. John Bureau engaged, by means of his artillery, to burn the city in three weeks; but it was thought too much severity would be dangerous. Bordeaux was therefore excused, on paying [October 17th] 100,000 crowns in gold. Thus ended a terrible contest of a century's duration, during which the nationality of France was formed. The English still possessed Guisnes and Calais; but these two places dove-tailed into the estates of the house of Burgundy, and were rather an annoyance to him than to the king. Of the domination of the English, there remained no other trace, but that which was presented by woods extending into the fields, which had for forty years remained uncultivated.

Before quitting Guienne, Dunois led his troops into the domains of John d'Armagnac, who for many years had lived in disgraceful intimacy with his own sister Isabella. He had compelled his chaplain to bless this criminal union, and threatened, if he refused, to cause him to be thrown into the river. His uncle having endeavoured to bring the lady to a sense of shame, John furiously drew his sword upon his relation, intending to kill him. To supply the climax, John had installed by force of arms, his bastard brother, John de Lescun, in the archiepiscopal see of Auch, in opposition to the pope and the king. He treated with contempt the orders of the parliament at Toulouse, threw certain lords into prison, and would not allow them to have any food till they had thrice shouted "Long live the Armagnac." This took place while Talbot held in check the royal army. The English expelled, justice was soon done, so far as this sovereign was concerned. Stripped of his estates, he fled to Flanders, and subsequently to Burgundy, but Philippe did not wish even to see him. This coldness proceeded rather from a recollection of former differences, than from respect for the royal authority, for the house of Burgundy had already begun to be the rallying point for all who were opposed to it. When the trial of the Duke d'Alençon for calling the English into France, took place in 1438, Master John the goldsmith, the ambassador of Philippe the Good, protested in the name of his master against the judgment with which a prince of the blood was threatened, one of the great vassals who so long had the kingdom at their mercy. The king paid no regard to this interested intervention, and the duke was sentenced to die; but he was thrown into prison, and his property confiscated to increase the revenues of the crown. Apart from other considerations, Charles had a motive for treating the interference of the Burgundian with little respect, as he had already for the last year, protected a greater rebel than the Duke d'Alençon.

Since the extinction of *Praguerie*, there had never been a sincere reconciliation between the dauphin and his father. The manner in which the queen had been neglected was said to have disgusted Louis, who one day was so far carried away by his resentment, that he gave Madam de Beauté, as Agnes Sorel was called, since the king had bestowed on her the chateau

de Beauté, a box on the ear. He endeavoured to tamper with the archers of the Scotch guard; but in 1446, his intrigues were detected, and his accomplices put to death. He then left the court, where the favourite counsellors of the king held him under strict restraint. The last time he saw his father, he left his chamber bare-headed, exclaiming, "By this uncovered head, I swear to revenge myself on those who have turned me out of my house." His wrath, however, was for a long period impotent. Retiring into Dauphiny, Louis, in a thousand ways, endeavoured to create an important faction. He contracted alliances in secret, in his own name, with the Duke of Savoy, with Florence, and with the princes of Milan. He instituted parliaments, founded universities, reformed the ordinances, and the monetary system of the country, and displayed a degree of activity, dubious in its character, perhaps, but which attested extraordinary energy and perseverance. Charles VII., meanwhile, as a man who considers his task to be performed, relapsed into the peaceful and luxurious character he had formerly been. From the arms of Agnes Sorel, who died in 1450, he passed to those of her niece, the Lady de Villiquier, who, by a rare tact, of which French history affords a second example, surrounded herself with the most beautiful young females of humble condition that could be found, and thus, by the distraction of caprice, confirmed her power over the wavering heart of the king. It was in this free and easy company that Charles spent the last years of his life, passing at his leisure from château to château, in Touraine and Berry, on the banks of the beautiful Loire, which recalled to him so many circumstances of interest. His people easily forgave such irregularities as were witnessed in him, in consideration of the tranquillity and safety which they owed to his policy. The hostile position of the dauphin, however, gave him some concern. In 1456, uneasy on account of the long absence of his son, and at the despotic authority which he exercised in his province, Charles ordered him to return to court; and Louis obstinately adhering to his resolution to keep away, the Count de Dammartin, Antoine Chabanne, marched with an army into Dauphiny. Louis did not wait his coming, but feigning to join a hunting party, fled to Brussels, followed only by a few of his servants. Philippe gave the heir to the crown a magnificent reception, and furnished for him a house suitable to his high rank, and established him in the château of Genappe, about four leagues from Brussels, with an allowance of 2,500 livres per month. Louis remained there till the death of his father, enjoying the pleasures of the chase, and those of the table, with convivial companions. There, he was best esteemed who best recounted tales of gallantry, and he who furnished the most luscious story, was most welcome. The Count de Charokais, the bastard of Burgundy, and the sieurs De Vienne, De Dagoine, De Thianges, De Rothelin, De Lannoy, De Crequi, contributed their share to these sportive narratives; and at times the grand duke himself joined the revellers. A collection of the histories recited in these meetings was made and published, under the title of "The hundred novels."

This mirthful exile was prolonged till July, 1461. Charles was then fifty-eight years of age. An abscess came in his mouth; and as Adam Fumée, his physician, could not cure it, the declining monarch was led to believe that some one had wished to poison him. The name of the dauphin was on every tongue. Charles felt extremely afflicted at this odious suspicion. He refused all nourishment for eight days, when his servants, seeing that he was about to perish for want of sustenance, forcibly introduced some food to his mouth. It was too late; his stomach could not receive it. On the 27th, Charles VII., the Victorious, expired at Meun, after reigning thirty-nine years. His character presents a singular union of weakness with energy, of carelessness with devotion. With his love of order and his bland philosophy, his would have been a fine character, if it had not been stained, deeply stained, by the irredeemable vice of ingratitude. Of all the instruments of his good fortune that he destroyed, or suffered to be destroyed, after being aided by them, none deserves more to be respected than the faithful and generous Jacques Cœur, who, sacrificed to the mean hatred of a court, was disgraced the year after that which witnessed the submission of Normandy. This is an act which must be fatal to the fame of Charles. We should, however, bear in mind his domestic annoyances, and the alarms which, from day to day, surrounded royalty at that eventful period. Like all weak kings, Charles was easily led to believe that treason was at hand; and at last he fell a victim to suspicion; but it ought not to be forgotten his death was sincerely mourned by his people.

Great changes were expected on the accession of Louis XI., "the poorest king's son that had ever lived," to use his own expressions. He arrived at Genappe, full of hatred which was to be gratified, and many who had been about the late king deemed it prudent to fly, while others hastened to present themselves before the royal exile. The dead monarch was abandoned by all. His old friend, Tanneguy du Châtel, was the only one that remained faithful. He took upon himself the expenses of his obsequies, which cost more than 30,000 livres; and these performed, he immediately returned to Britany. The ceremony of the funeral of a King of France, at St. Denis, ordinarily commenced in mourning, but terminated in rejoicing. It was not so on this occasion: sobs burst from the people when the herald was heard to proclaim, "Thus has God been pleased to take to himself the soul of the victorious Charles VII.; but when it was added, "Long live the King of France, Louis XI.," no sound of gladness was heard from the throng, and tears continued to flow. At the close of the banquet in the abbey, Dunois exclaimed, when rising from the table, "We have lost our master; let each take care of himself."

On the 30th of August, Louis XI. made his solemn entry into Paris, which he had not seen for twenty-six years. He came surrounded by his Burgundian friends, who incurred an immense expence to furnish him with a pompous escort. They were seen everywhere, and all the wealth of the

kingdom seemed at their disposal. On all sides Louis was besieged by them, and they failed not to present him with obligations which he had been content to sign when he was in distress. He gave to the Count de Charolais, son to the duke, the lieutenancy of Normandy, with an income of thirty-six thousand livres. Antony de Croy, one of the chief nobles of Burgundy, was named grand master of the Hotel du Roi. There the royal largesses stopped. The Duke of Burgundy was already deemed too powerful; Louis felt himself eclipsed by his late protector; and the manner in which the Parisians welcomed their former chief, was well calculated to awaken very uneasy recollections in the suspicious mind of the new king. They hardly cared to look on their own princes, but crowded round the Duke of Burgundy wherever he appeared in public. On the day of the *entrée*, at the moment of the procession passing the halls, a butcher called out to him, "You are welcome, noble duke; you have been a long time coming here, much as you have been wished for." To gratify his hatred, Louis made a great number of vacancies in the public offices, but filled them again exclusively with his own creatures. Philippe submitted to him a list of twenty-four good and discreet persons, not one of whom would Louis accept. He, nevertheless, continued to overwhelm the duke with flattery, and with hollow demonstrations of gratitude. "To him," said he to the deputies from the university, "I owe both my life and my crown." He exhibited such friendship for the Count de Charolais, that they appeared like brothers; but the counsellors of Burgundy set little value on this, and murmured to each other, that it was "court holy water, and nothing more." Philippe at length returned to his dominions, and left Louis to govern in his own way.

The first acts of his reign were inspired by the hatreds of the dauphin. At once to reverse the policy of his father, he set at liberty the Count of Alençon, on whom he was to pour his vengeance on a future day. The chancellor, William Juvénile des Ursins, was replaced by Pierre de Morvilliers, John de Beuil, Admiral of France. The *prevôt* of merchants, and the greater part of the members of the council, and of the courts of justice, were removed to make room for new officers. Of all the servants of Charles VII., the one most in danger was Chabanne, who, at the first news of the demise of the crown, endeavoured, by appeasing Louis, to gain safety. The rage of the king against him was so well known, that nobody cared to offer him assistance. Having sent Voyant, his gentleman, to Avesnes, with a letter to the sieur de Montauban, "Tell your master," said Montauban to Voyant, "that if the king takes him, he will make the dogs eat his heart; and, if you remain here seven hours, I will have you drowned." Chabanne was thrown into the Bastille, his property confiscated, and his wife reduced to such poverty, that she was glad, with her children, to seek relief from a peasant at Dammartin, who supported her for six months. The fury of Louis was directed against the institutions of his father. In 1455, Charles had imposed upon the court of Rome, the famous pragmatic sanction of Bourges,

which confirmed the Gallican church in its ancient privileges, and bestowed on it new ones. Louis sacrificed it to Pope Pius II., who had prepared the act himself, when he was secretary to the council of Bale. He soon repented this precipitate step. To requite it, he had claimed the creation of a French legate, for the nomination of benefices, with the right of residence in the kingdom, in order that money should not go out of it; the abandonment of the house of Arragon, which contended with that of Anjou for the sovereignty of Naples; and, finally, the cardinal's hat for the Bishop of Arras, John de Jouffroy, who was engaged to conduct this negociation. The last favour claimed, Pius instantly granted, as it cost him nothing; and John de Jouffroy, delighted with the concession, gave to the pope the act setting aside the pragmatic sanction. Great public rejoicings took place in Rome on account of this arrangement; and Pius blessed a sword on Christmas



night, which was sent to the King of France, in a sheath splendidly adorned with diamonds. The artful monarch, an adept in dupery, sent the sword back to the pope, and left the parliament to deal with the agreement which had been concluded at Rome. They refused to register the act so hastily conceded. Notwithstanding the rejoicings which had taken place, notwithstanding the royal seal was in the hands of Pius II., the Gallican church was re-instated in its privileges.

We have now arrived at a most important era in the History of France. From this time forward, she will be found to act a different part among the nations of Europe, from that which she had previously sustained. The

circumstances of the times were unlike those of any former period, and especially, it may be remarked, the influence of letters had everywhere begun to prove its importance.

Looking back from this epoch, we cannot perceive that, from the accession of Philippe de Valois, great improvements were made in science, except so far as regards the art of war. In connection with sieges and battles, and generally with the work of destruction, the advances witnessed in the course of a century and a quarter, were certainly of no common order. The fashioning an army in the form of a wedge, and entrenching the archers behind iron pointed pallisades, were masterly contrivances; they led to great results, and were long the boast of the victorious English. Eventually they were over-matched by the science of the French. The perfection to which artillery was brought by the two Bureaux, compelled a change in military tactics—a close approximation to modern warfare. Possessing great superiority in this arm, the French soon expelled their English invaders. Policy, however, did more than artillery. The prince who fled in dismay from Agincourt, gained more lasting triumphs for his country by the prudence which he subsequently exerted, than had ever been realised by the renowned conquerors of Créçy, Poitiers and Agincourt. We cannot, indeed, while following the progress of arms, discover any strong evidence of the march of enlightened ideas. To say nothing of the extravagance of the claims advanced by Edward and Henry to the French throne, we in vain ask, when unexpected success was theirs, what benefit did England derive from it? It is humiliating to see that Edward III. promised himself no greater reward for the splendid horrors of Créçy, than securing Calais as an English possession, that he might with the greater facility enter, at any future period, on a new career of devastation and bloodshed.

We would, however, willingly suppose that refinement, and with it a degree of humanity, previously unknown, were the sequel to a series of battles. The noble generosity with which the Black Prince consoled his royal captives, and the boundless hospitality which awaited him at Windsor, as well as the high minded tone in which Henry V. soothed his illustrious prisoners, command our unqualified admiration. But the pleasure we feel in contemplating this pleasing picture, is interrupted by the dismal butcheries which the same great captains sanctioned, where less distinguished individuals were in their power, and themselves were no longer on a stage inviting the world's applause. To the knight who personally fought with him, and beneath whose sword he had nearly fallen, the English king exhibited great courtesy and generosity; but he was with infinite difficulty kept from hanging the brave devoted citizens of Calais, who had fought for their sovereign as he expected his subjects to do for him. Like exceptions may be taken to the conduct of Edward the Black Prince and Henry V. Irregularly great, if on some occasion they were enlightened and magnanimous, on others they were mean and blood-thirsty. These, it is true, were English

commanders, but their actions belong less to their country than to the age. The deeds of blood, the renewals of amity, in the everlasting struggles between the potentates of France, Navarre, and Burgundy, present nothing to indicate a general amelioration; and the exploits and fate of the Marcells and the Artevilles, bear out this view of the subject. We find the people sensible of oppression, ready to follow any influential demagogue who offered to be their leader. Extravagant admiration was followed by cold desertion or brutal violence, and the idol of one day was commonly selected to be the victim of the next. The multitude were sensible of pain; they rose in vengeance against wrong, but fickle and essentially ignorant, they knew not how to seek the right. Always restless, they laboured for change rather than for reform. They were easily excited, and soon appeased or subdued.

The national character of France appears to little advantage in the scenes to which we allude. Meanly crouching to a foreign enemy, the King of England was greeted with the cry of "Noël!" in Paris, and the greatest affection was expressed for the monarch they hated. The English were repeatedly invited to take a part in their quarrels, and alternately courted as protectors, and massacred or execrated as tyrants.

Both in France and England, superstition flourished as vigorously as ever. Edward III., during a storm, vowed to Heaven that he would put an end to the evils which he had brought on France; but thought little of his vow when the thunder had ceased. The French became bold as lions, the English timid as sheep, when the Pucelle appeared, sustained by "her voices." Accident made her the prisoner of the English; and then the frantic bigotry, common to both countries, made a horrible sacrifice of the guiltless enthusiast. It was not the wrath, nor the policy of Bedford, mean and hateful as that might be, which doomed the unhappy Jeanne to expiate her virtue at the stake, the learning and piety of France assisted in the atrocious murder. Gelu and Gerson were written to in the first instance on the subject of her inspiration. The former returned an elaborate treatise in reply, shewing that her mission might be from God. Gerson does not appear to have denied it; yet neither he nor the other profound theologian, had a word to urge in behalf of a suffering captive; and the university of Paris, prompted no doubt by Gerson, ignominiously laboured, with fatal success, to seal her doom.

Nor was it only in this instance that superstition was in the ascendant, and its shameless votaries triumphant over humanity. When Richemond seized the sieur de Giac, it was not enough to accuse him of crimes against the state, but he was convicted of selling one of his hands to the devil! Such senseless cruelties, preposterous as hateful, forbid us to think that mental cultivation had made great advances among the people at large, as no personal rancour which might dispose a captain or a statesman to destroy an enemy, would lead him voluntarily to appear ridiculous, as well as wicked. The charge preferred, though the accuser might not believe it, was one that he expected others would believe.

In the habits of the people, no striking alteration can be remarked. Literature, however, amidst the convulsions of the times, continued its onward course. The great English reformer, Wickliffe, gave to the world a translation of the bible; and the importance of his labours was soon acknowledged in every country in Europe. The clergy took the alarm in England, France and Germany, and would fain have dealt with him as a heretic. Supported by John of Gaunt, it was his good fortune to pass through life unharmed. Not so his immediate followers. The doings of the council of Constance present a tale of mournful interest, in which we find all that was recognised as pious, learned and great, differing and at variance on many points, unanimous in the resolution to shed the blood of unhappy men, the devout John Huss, and the ardent Jerome of Prague, whose only crime was a sincere desire to enlighten their fellow men. The struggles of reason they hoped to put down for ever by the fires of persecution.

The real offence of those martyrs was their joining with the noble-minded English reformer, Lord Cobham, to condemn the sordid and dissolute lives of the priests. That alone was the cause of their being pursued with such unrelenting hate. The bishops of that day held, that the church of Christ would be in danger, if its ministers were compelled to lead a decent life. Marriage was denied them, but mistresses they might solace themselves with *ad libitum*; and for a time the head of the Christian world, the representative of St. Peter, was a monster, who, besides driving a unholy and degrading trade in indulgencies and holy relics, was said to have alienated the goods of monasteries for his own benefit, and to have denied that there was any life after this. In the articles, ultimately preferred against John XXIII., it was further stated, "that his life had been dissolute, and he incorrigibly obstinate against all admonitions. That, from his first youth, he had shewed a wicked disposition, in being addicted to all vices. That he was a man of no devotion, observed no fasts nor abstinences, never said his breviary, and very rarely celebrated mass, and when he did, it was in such a hasty manner, as had rather the appearance of a cavalier than a priest." Yet this man was allowed to sit in the papal chair, though, in addition to what has been mentioned, common fame accused him of having conspired to poison his predecessor, Alexander V., to have lived incestuously with his brother's wife, and to have been improperly intimate with many of the nuns under his care. Even at last, when his crimes were exposed, and it was pretended to bring him to justice, this great criminal did not follow John Huss and Jerome of Prague to the stake.

For the fashions of the time we have little to notice. The most remarkable picture furnished to us, is that of Queen Isabella and her attendants, moving popular indignation, by having head-dresses so preposterously tall, that the wearers could not pass through the palace gateways without bowing their heads.

In the art of government one great improvement was made. The evils

consequent on disbanding large bodies of fighting men at the termination of a war, were long deplored. They had been accustomed to march wherever plunder might invite, and to form armies which, if not in direct hostility to the king, disdained to yield obedience to his authority. The edict of Chalons-sur-Marne put an end to this dreadful anomaly. Great was the acknowledged benefit, but, as elsewhere observed, it was one that could not be secured but at a high price. To be spared the recurrence of the dire visitation which so often occurred in former times, of the bands or "companies," the people were content to receive what have not always been placed at the head of the advantages insured by good government, a system of annual taxation, and a standing army !



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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to dine, and, as the cortege passed before the Hotel St. Paul, Queen Isabella was seen at a window. The royal child was told to look on his grandmother. In that moment the two shadows gazed stedfastly on each other, the pale young one took off his chaperon and saluted the old queen, and she, making a humble reverence to him, turned aside to weep. It was



a sad spectacle for the widow of Charles VI., to witness the enthusiasm of the scene in which she had no part, at the moment in which that son triumphed whom she had deserted. The presence of a stranger, whom they were forced to call their king, added to the discontents of the people. When the day named for the coronation, the 17th December, arrived, it was clearly manifest that Henry was not the real king of the country. All was confusion and dissatisfaction, with no symptoms of attachment. A foreign prelate, the Cardinal of Winchester, crowned the young king at Nôtre Dame, in contempt of the rights of the Bishop of Paris, who never forgave the English that affront. After the ceremony, those who assisted at it were to dine on the marble table in the palace; but the English, who took upon themselves to arrange every thing, were so negligent, that a mob